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THE GOSSIPS' BOWL

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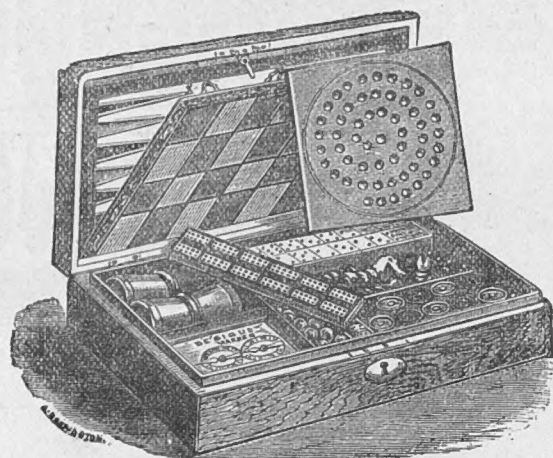
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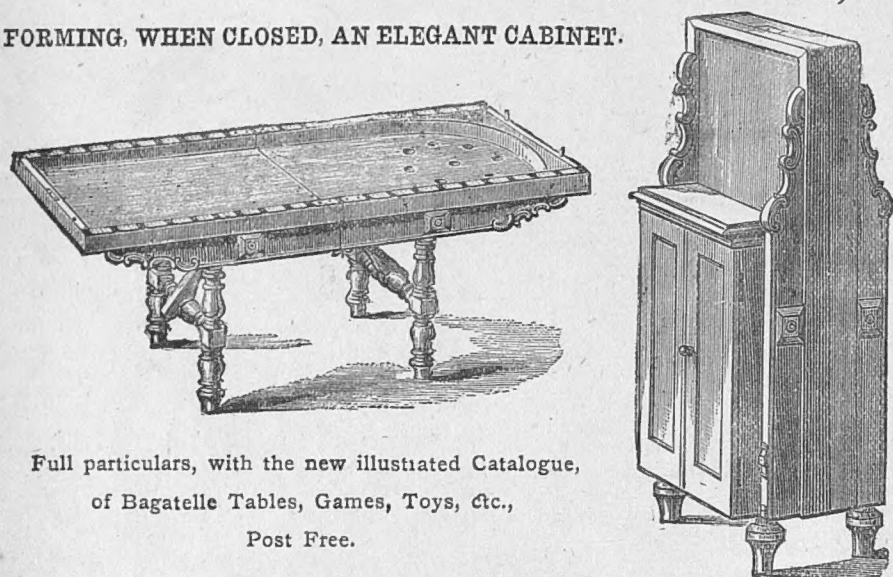
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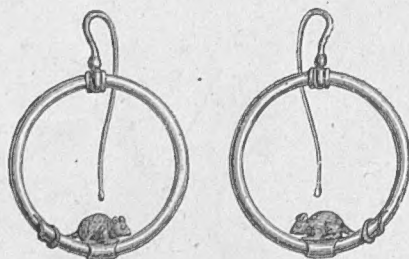
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THE ILLUSTRATED Sporting and Dramatic News.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1877.

THE GOSSIPS’ BOWL.

SPIRIT of Mirth, whatever shape or name
’Tis yours to bear at this auspicious date,
When Christmas lights his hospitable flame,
And mighty roasts monopolise the grate;
Tell us the secrets of your little game,
And, like a Robin Goodfellow, narrate
The moist experience of your jocund soul,
What time you lurked within a gossips’ bowl.
“Oh! master mine,” the jovial sprite began,
“Full many a juicy conclave have I seen,
When kindling laughter sympathetic ran
From guest to guest on some gay wassail ’een,
And some there were who dallied with the can,
Till all became so gloriously serene,
That speakers, one by one, encumbered there
With load of lush, were ‘moved to leave the chair.’
Such mighty revels at the ‘Cat and Fiddle’
I mind me of, a century ago,
When thirsty souls essayed to solve the riddle
Of what amount of liquor they could stow
Beneath the ample belt that girt their middle;
And scorned to cry a melancholy go,
Till morning found them on the sanded floor,
Just game to hiccup out ‘One bottle more.’
It chanced, by favour of our good Queen Mab,
One night my mission to the ‘Cat’ I sped,
What time the bravo lurks in wait to stab,
And ‘all good people’ snore in downy bed;
In ‘very likeness of a roasted crab,’
I turned before the embers glowing red,
Hissed, cracked, and shrivelled, till the royst’ring crew
Snatched me at last to crown the reeking brew.
And first the paunchy Simon might you note
On cubes of sugar rub the lemon’s rind;
Kit adds the juice of six, wherein to float
The Seville’s peel; while Tony stands behind,
With mould of jelly solved in butter-boat,
To make the mixture generous, smooth, and kind;
Sam in a quart of boiling water fuses
This combination of ‘foundation’ juices.
Anon, a pint of rum, imperial measure,
Flows gurgling in, a ditto of old brandy;
Three gills of sherry, curaçoa at pleasure,
And capillaire in place of sugar candy.
The mixture stands for half an hour at leisure,
Then, with three pints of boiling water handy,
They blend the punch in ‘one harmonious whole,’
And pop me roasted in the fragrant bowl.
Meanwhile the sleek director of their toils
With unctuous tale the grateful task beguiles,
Till with tumultuous laughter overboils
That gloating group of antiquated files,
Red-nosed, deep-throated, eager for the spoils
Of yon deep bowl, that not a hundred Niles
Could fill to satisfy, in glowing spate,
The parched Saharas for its ‘rise’ that wait.
Ay me, the quips of that uproarious rout,
Hither and thither, like a bark distressed,
I tossed, as ladies, ever in and out
Incontinently dipping, broke my rest;
What spicy tales and scandals flew about,
How broadened out each double-pointed jest!
How many a time I marked the liquor shrink
To doleful dregs from over-brimming brink!
There on a golden reef of sodden rind,
With ‘isles of spice’ and rocks of clove around,
They left me stranded, cold repose to find,
There in the dusky dawn by Molly found,
My duty done, at peace with all mankind,
The Fairy Queen her faithful Puck unbound;
Destined some other character to take
Than guardian angel of the amber lake.
Ask me no more—but mix, as cure for care,
Your sprite’s prescription as above presented,
Nor fail to roast an apple for his share;
So shall you live at ease, and die contented,
Cheered to the core by merry Christmas fare,
By Christmas creditors uncircumvented;
And bless the mellow seasons as they roll,
Warmed by the life-blood of the Gossips’ Bowl!

AMPHION.

“THE JACKET OF THE EARL.”

BY THE AUTHOR OF “HEATHERTHORP.”

CHAPTER I.

THE DOWN TRAIN.

“DOES this ’ere train stop at Carlton Moffat?”
“That depends.”
“Depends—on what?”
“On the number of passengers.”
“Well, you are an obliging company, I don’t think! Here am I due at Carlton Moffat to-night on important business, and you condemn me to kick my heels in town till the morning unless I find—”
“Three more—”
“Three more coves to join me. But I must go to-night. Suppose I pay their fare, eh?”
“The regulations state that unless four passengers are booked the train cannot stop. I am here to enforce those regulations. Be good enough to allow some one else to approach the window. You can come back and try again in the course of ten minutes—if you like.”
The applicant, a middle-aged gentleman of groom-like exterior, upon whose smooth-shaven visage the name Newmarket was plainly inscribed, grumblingly retired to solace himself in the refreshment-room with a mixed beverage of an effervescing character, and a corpulent cigar.

“One first and two second returns—Carlton Moffat—please.”
“Certainly, sir. Here, boy, run after that gentleman and tell him the train stops at Carlton to-night.”

The second applicant wore a livery and looked like a valet. On leaving the booking-office he was joined by a mite of a man in tight trousers and a gigantic Ulster, and the pair rushed with ostentatious zeal to a first class carriage that was labelled “engaged,” a compartment of which was half full of priceless peltry and a selection of periodical literature. The renter of the compartment stood outside smoking a cigarette.

“My lord,” began the purchaser of the tickets, “I—”
“Edwards, you are an ass! Did I not tell you before we left Pall Mall that I particularly wished you and Kit to drop all that sort of thing for the present! Now, don’t let me have to tell you again. Until we return to town I am Mr. Clifton, d’ye hear?”

“Yes, m—; yes, sir.”
“Now give me my ticket, and go. Stay—I need not tell you both that for a few days listening will pay better than blabbing.”

Edwards bowed and withdrew. The slight, but resolute-looking young gentleman, whom he had addressed as my lord, lounged into the cosiest corner of the only first-class through-carriage to Carlton Moffat. Edwards and Kit took their places, the guard gave the final re-assuring signal, and, with the usual shriek, the train started.

The interview of the two servants with their temporarily irate master had not passed unobserved. The stably person, who had expressed himself in severe terms in reference to the company’s arrangements, and whose destination was also Carlton Moffat, had been a decidedly interested spectator of the *rencontre*. Edwards and Kit had no sooner taken their seats than he took his in the same carriage, of which they were the sole occupants.

“Don’t object to smoking, I hope,” said he, addressing himself especially to the light-weight with effusive cordiality. “But there, I am sure you don’t. I am not so sure about our friend, though.”

There was an air of smug respectability about Edwards that smacked of the Church. He, however, assured his interlocutor that he was himself rather partial to the odour of a superior cigar, while Kit declared with cheerful bluntness that he might smoke till he was black in the face for anything he cared.

“Come, now, that’s proper. We shall get on swimmin’, as the sayin’ is. I s’pose you are, like me, bound for Carlton?” (They nodded). “That was your guv’nor, I presume?” (Another nod). “Han’som sort of cove. One of our British aristocracy, eh?” (A simultaneous shake of the head from the pair served to express dissent from this flattering insinuation.) “No? Well, you do surprise me! Thort I could pick out the right sort anywhere. And you—wherever have I seen you?” Addressing Kit.

“Can’t say. P’raps in Japan.”

“Never was there.”

“California?”

“Bless you, no!”

“East or West Injies?”

“No, my little eight stun ten, in hold England! The land of the brave and the free. The shrine of each patriarch’s devotion, my boy!”

“Considerin’ I was carried out of the land of the brave and the free in a clothes basket, at the tender age of three weeks, and rememberin’ that I only came back to this shrine of your particular pal’s devotion last Monday, you are either the biggest wonder in the world or a particler friend of the family.”

The only reply which the by this time effectually snubbed stranger vouchsafed to Kit’s elaborate rebuff was a look that expressed a good deal, and the emission of a cloud of smoke of unusual density. Half an hour devoted to fitful slumber, and ten minutes to experiments of a toxicological nature at Swindleham Junction, brought the trio together again, and for the rest of the journey the stranger proved very good company indeed. He apparently knew every rood of the country in the immediate neighbourhood of Carlton Moffat.

“You can’t see it well now the sun’s gone down, but that’s old Fothergill’s place. He’s got the best strain of greyhounds and game fowl in the county, by—! Ah! there it is. The Nest. And yonder’s the stables. You have heard of Cutts, the trainer? Yes. Well, that’s his drum, and the lads there do say that it’s a picture of cleanliness and comfort. He’s hard on them tho’ if they don’t go square. Thrashed one within an inch of his life the other day, and sent him about his business for blowing.”

The mysterious beverages of Swindleham Junction had loosened the stranger’s tongue. It was not necessary for either Edwards or Kit to interpose a remark.

“There used to be great doings here in the old Earl’s days. Not him that’s just dead. He was a psalm-singer. Went up to Exeter Hall every May, like a heathen, instead of going like a christian to Epsom. I mean the Earl. They trained winners of Derbies here then—and Legers—and won heaps o’ cups. And well the tenants knew it! To say nothin’ of the parson and the workus. None on ’em was forgotten. I wonder whether the young Earl—him that’s been abroad so long—does throw back to the old cove as the papers say he does?—We shall see.”—As if suddenly bethinking himself, the stranger uttered those last words with an air of constraint. Taking from an inside pocket a book which appeared to contain a number of papers, he withdrew one of these, and proceeded to study it with great attention. Edwards relapsed into slumber, but Kit watched the stranger’s movements with the relish of an entomologist who has chanced upon a new species of insect. The stranger made some clumsy notes with the stump of a pencil in his plethoric pocket-book, and then carefully returned the latter to its place. That done, he drew a long breath of relief, and rising, looked out of the carriage window.

“Just so,” he remarked. “We have lost sight of The Nest. It will be more’n half-an-hour afore we reach Carlton. The old Earl would’n’t stand no railways on his land, and we have to go round to get to the town. It’s only a village, but they call it a town.”

As the observations did not appear to demand a reply from Kit, that observant creature remained dumb. Saying nothing was easy—and, he remembered his master’s injunctions.

“Carl’nfat!” exclaimed the solitary porter as the train groaned its way into the station. His chief was waiting, lantern in hand, to do honour to the passengers. He was not alone. A ruddy, dapper little man in a low-crowned hat, and who carried an ashplant, stood by his side, as the train pulled up, and duly accompanied him to the door of the second class carriage, which accommodated Kit, Edwards, and the stranger. The sight of our garrulous friend acted like a charm on Joe Cutts, (for it was no other than that astute trainer of thoroughbreds); relinquishing on the instant, his intention to speak to Edwards, he retired into the sombre background, and before the station-master was aware of his withdrawal, had melted away into the dark beyond.

CHAPTER II.

AT THE BILLINGHAM ARMS.

“I RECEIVED your note, my lord—I beg your pardon—Mr. Clifton, and have carried out your instructions to the syllable. Except my wife, who is discretion itself, and Pickles, the ostler, who has had the office, there is not a soul about the place

knows you. As one might put it, you were scarcely a yearling when you were at the old place before.”

The speaker is Reuben Sorrel, mine host of the Billingham Arms. The scene of his observations is the best room in that agreeable hostelry. On the walls are displayed portraits, by Herring, of the old Earl’s equine heroes. Upon a snowy tablecloth at a comfortable distance from a fire that is now at its reddest maturity, covers have been laid for two.

“I knew I could rely implicitly on you,” replied the young gentleman addressed as Mr. Clifton. “I have my reasons for this temporary concealment of my identity, as you may conjecture. But where is Cutts? He was to have met me at the station.”

“He went to the station, my lord—I beg pardon, Mr. —.”
“Oh! never mind. If it comes easier, and I suppose it does, abandon my *alias* while we are together. You were saying—”

“That Cutts went to the station. You may depend upon it that he had his reasons for not showing, just as you have yours, my lord, for not wishing just yet to be known as the Earl of Billingham. But he may be waiting in my little snugery even now. Shall I send him up?”

“Do, Sorrel—and see that we are not interrupted.”

The landlord bowed and withdrew. Presently he returned, and ushered in the trainer, who waited until his introducer had left the room, and then calmly locked the door.

“Excuse me, my lord, but they are very fond of a fifty-to-one-chance in this house—I know ’em of old—and there is such a thing as spoiling a market. *Listen!* Why old Pickles would risk half an hour in that chimney, reek and all, to get a hold of a good thing. And Reuben, for all his velvet face, is pretty handy at a keyhole. But, hark you, my lord, do you know who came down in the same train with you?”

“Have ’nt the least idea, Cutts, I assure you. I saw nobody get out except Edwards and the Shrimp.”

“Well I did. That was why I cleared out. The man who rode from town in the same compartment as your people—of course they were not to be squeezed, I know that—was no less a professor than Winchester Harry, the deadliest tout in Great Britain.”

“But why?—he cannot know me—he has no idea—he—”

“Read that, my lord.”

Lord Billingham took the rather thumbed copy of the last edition of *The Spur*, which his trainer handed him, and read aloud the paragraph to which his attention had been directed, which specimen of typography was couched in these terms:

“Our Special Club Gossip writes to say that a certain youthful nobleman, who has recently come into his title, and all thereunto belonging, as the lawyers have it, is about to revive the glories of a once-famous training establishment, with which his illustrious grandsire was, for many years, intimately connected. It was the original intention of his lordship (who, by the way, has spent the past few years of his life abroad), to gradually get together, a stud, and try his best with it, in a modest way, next season, but a circumstance which occurred the other night at the—has had the effect of forcing his hand. The play is habitually high at the—but, on the night in question, it reached a height that has seldom been paralleled even in the old Corinthian days. How it came about is immaterial, but towards the close of a long night, Lord—and Major—found themselves pitted against each other, betting cool monkeys on the turn of the card. The Major was never in it; the youthful Peer could not do wrong. Never was seen such marvellous luck! In the end, the gallant officer lost his temper, and was provoked into making an observation, which appeared to convey a reflection on his opponent’s youth and inexperience. It was vain, he said, with contemptuous hauteur, to look for a sportsman’s revenge from such a boy! The retort was rapid and neat, reminding the old members who were present, of the grandfather (who had himself, been a frequent antagonist of the Major’s). Then you would have me infer, Major—that not until I have lost to you as you have lost to me, will you grant me my playing certificate? Thank you. But you shall have your revenge. You own a moral for the Occidental Handicap. He can fall down and win over the prophets. There are three others trained in the same stable, which, failing yours, must be there or thereabouts, Simpson’s lot in fact. I have won twenty thousand pounds of your money to-night. Now I will bet you that amount even, or forty thou. if you like, that I run one in the Occidental, which beats yours, or any of Simpson’s, all the lot in, wherever they finish! In justice to the Major, it should be stated that he did not rush at this Quixotic wager. Eventually, however, such was the pertinacity of Lord—he booked the bet, forty thousand even that Simpson’s lot beat Lord’s—single representative, the latter to be named by him three days before the race comes off. Our Special Club Gossip adds that the affair has given rise to a good deal of comment in sporting circles, for it is notorious that Lord—is not the possessor of a single hair in the tail of any thoroughbred in training!”

“Well, my lord, what do you think of that?”

“It matters little what I think, Cutts. Every word of it is true.”

“Ah! just so. You made that—excuse my saying it—damned foolish bet on the strength of my letter.”

“I did.”

“But suppose the mare breaks down!”

“Oh! she won’t do that, you know, Cutts,” replied Lord Billingham, with a smile, “and then what is this champion of theirs, this Fluker?”

“He was a rattling good two-year-old. He did nothing at three. Now he is four. He has performed twice. Once at Canterbury and once at a fashionable watering place, called Hayling Island. I said ‘performed.’”

“Well, but our mare might have been—”

“Nearer than last but one in the Oaks. I admit it, my lord. Let us change the subject. You know she has been backed?”

“Yes, confound it, the day after my kick-up with Major Puffin. How was that?”

“I caught one of my lads wiring to Mangold the bookmaker, who is—”

“Major Puffin’s commissioner!”

“Just so,” resignedly remarked the trainer, “and now, my lord, when I inform you that Winchester Harry is a salaried servant of clever Mr. Mangold, you will guess why I did not show at the railway station. Through the lad whom I discharged, he has got wind of this trial, and he means to see it—”

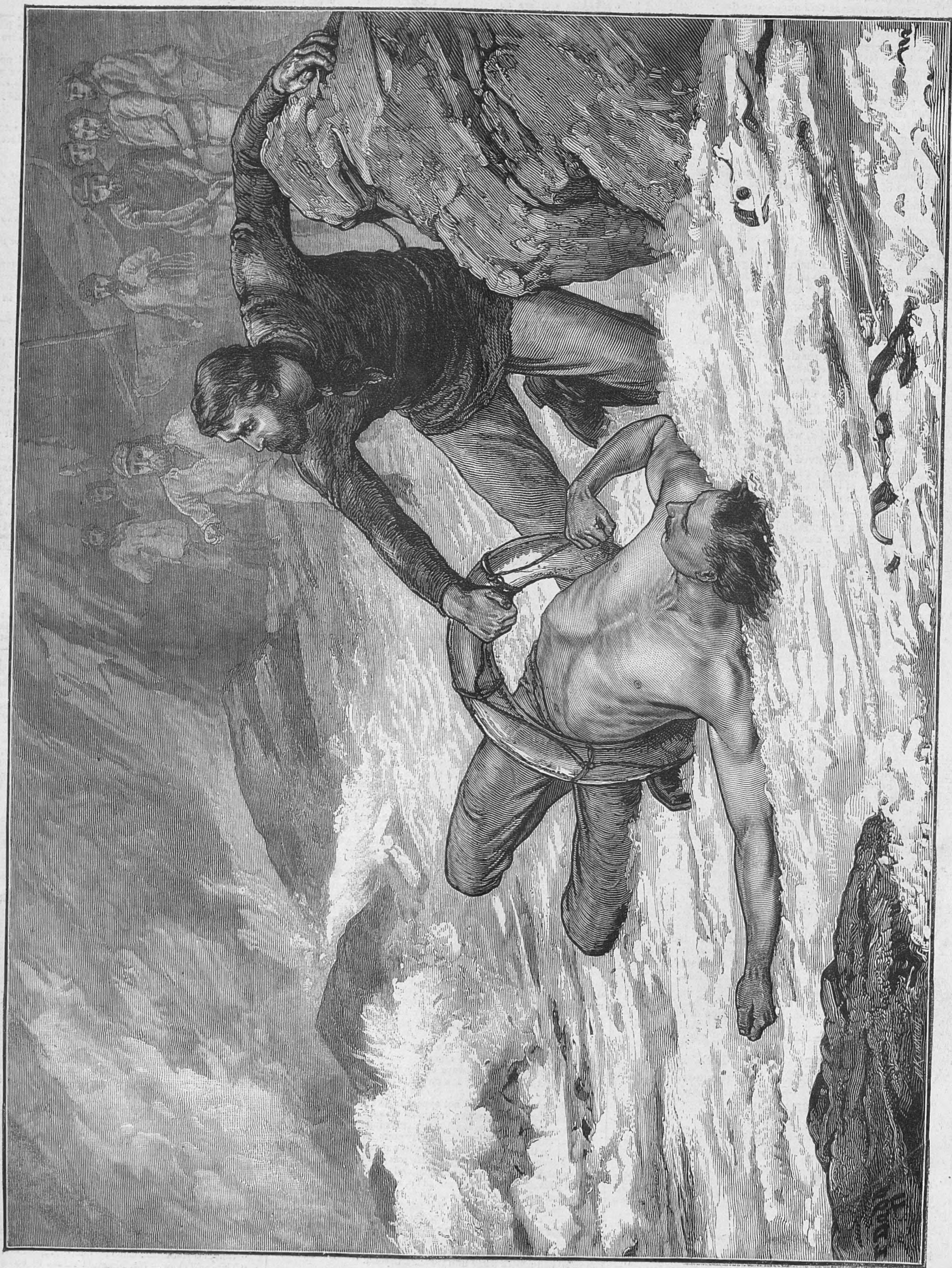
“Yes, and—”

“See it he shall!” exclaimed Cutts, striking the table with emphasis, and making the glass and delft dance again. “To-morrow morning Dolly Mayflower will be at eight to one, for the wretches have got to know I have a good ’un. To-morrow night she shall be driven back to fifties! Don’t ask me how. I know all the magistrates about here.”

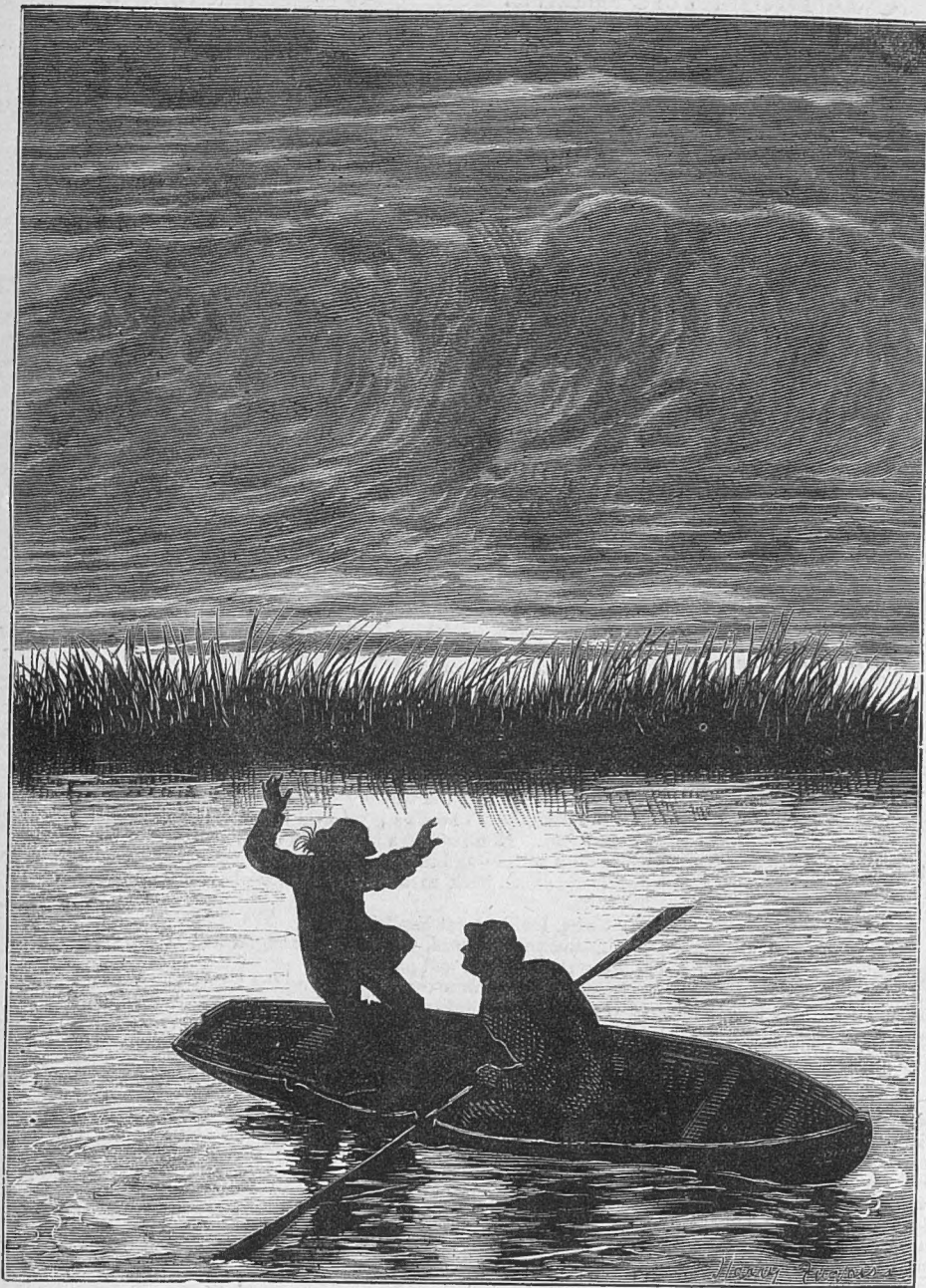
“What do you mean, Cutts?” queried Lord Billingham.

“Time will show. Mr. Mangold thinks to come it over me with the aid of Winchester Harry, does he? Well, you take a shade of odds that he finds his mistake out. As I said before, the magistrates about here are reasonable. Good night, my lord, to-morrow morning at four.—No, thank you. I must see the mare before I go to bed, and I have some instructions for The Shrimp.”

They shook hands, and Cutts retired.



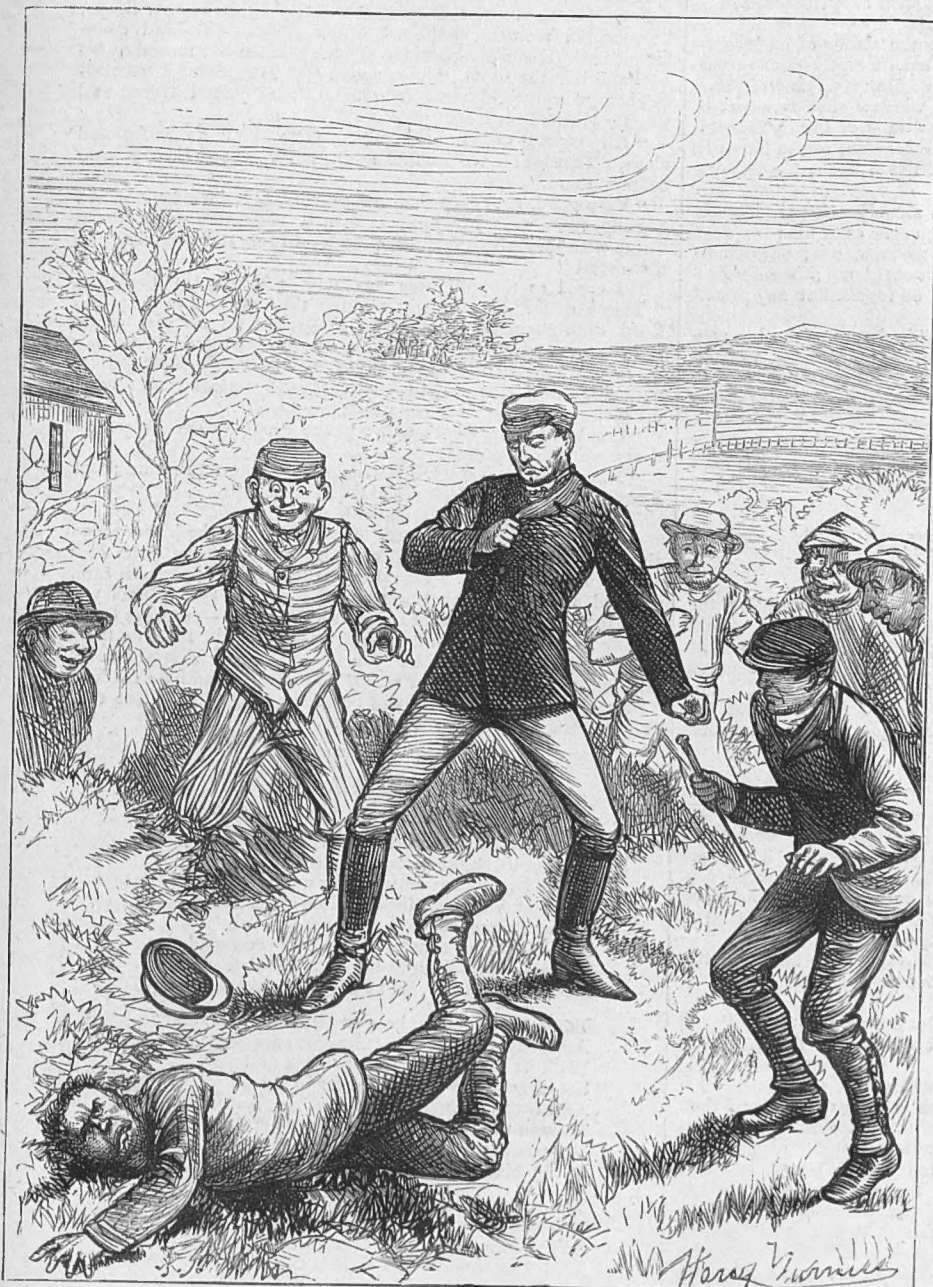
AT LAST!—(DRAWN BY FRANK DADD.)



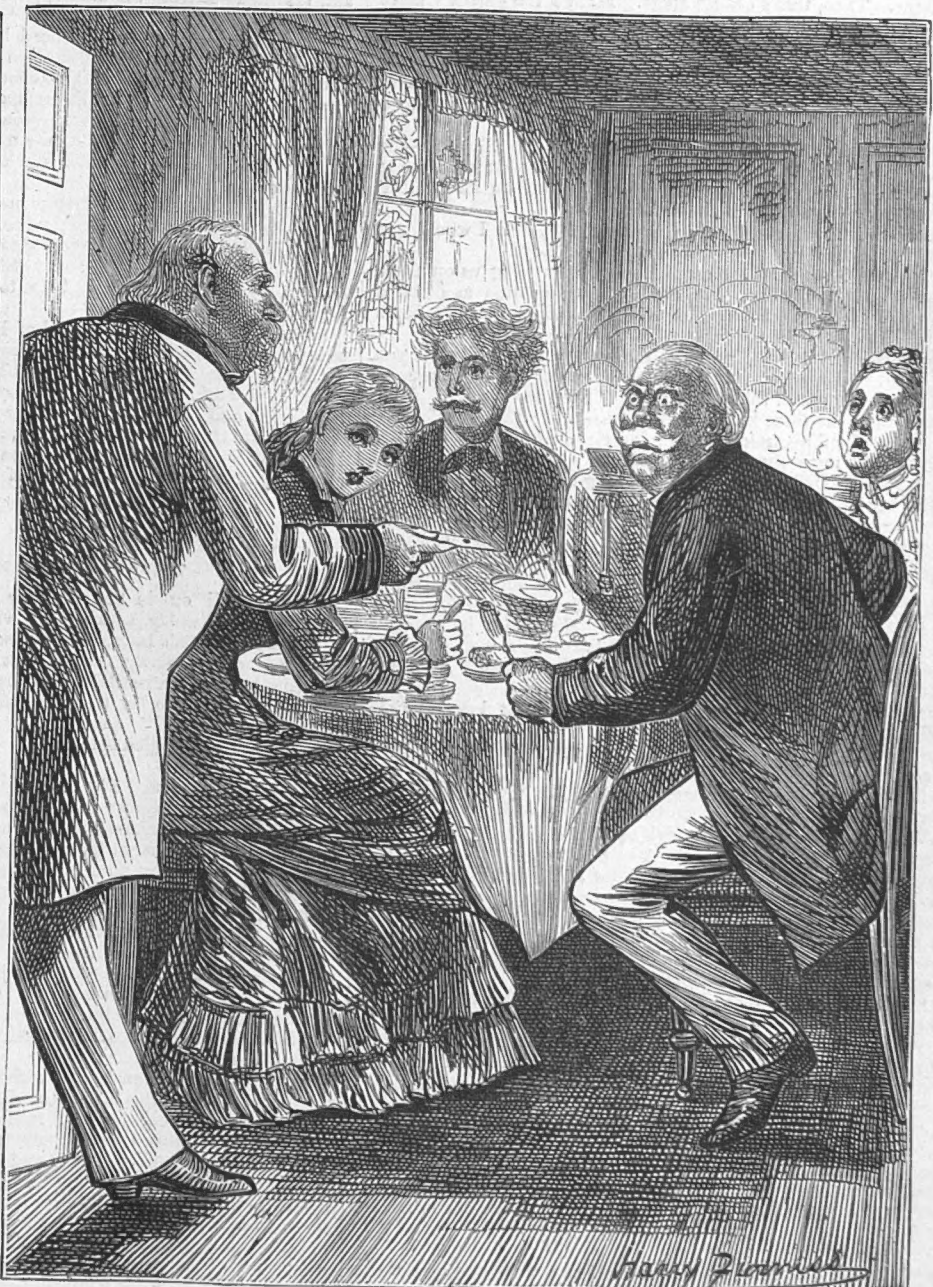
"Does it bring back to your mind no other scene?"
THOU ART THE MAN.—By MISS BRADDON.



"She pressed the handrail of the bridge."
THE ASTRONOMER ROYAL.—By RICHARD DOWLING.



He paused for breath with his abraded nose in the centre of a forest of turze."
THE JACKET OF THE EARL.—By BYRON WEBBER.



"As the four leading characters of this little drama were sitting at breakfast next morning —"
THE BRAZEN BOOTJACK.—By GODFREY TURNER.

Henry of Winchester was at that time engaged in a grave consultation with the discharged stable boy, a youth of perverted intelligence who, incensed at the treatment he had received at the hands of his righteously indignant master, was doing his utmost, as he ornamentally expressed it, to "quer their game."

"You had better hide in the hollow near the five-furlong post. I know they will be tried on the racecourse, and then you can see 'em both ways. You can't mistake the mare; she is a bright bay, with a blaze face, and two white heels. *Not me.* Why if he was to catch me near his place again he would skin me alive. The telegraph-office is at the railway station."

Henry of Winchester enjoined his landlady to call him next morning at a quarter before four.

CHAPTER III.

"THE TRIAL."

"Now, my lord," observed William Cutts to his patron, "there is no time to be lost." The conversation took place in the little parlour of The Nest over tumblers of rum-and-milk, which beverage the trainer had recommended as an infallible preventive of the ills to which those who inhale the misty morning air of the downs are liable. "There is not a minute to be lost. You have seen the saddles prepared, and the leads put in, and the cloths weighed. You have sealed them with your own hands. Not that you wished to do it. I know that. But, my lord, we must begin fair and square if you are to have that confidence in me which your grandfather always had. After the trial we will return here, and you shall write me a cheque for the mare while I write you a receipt. Then get back to town and back her for pounds, shillings, and pence. But there's the Shrimp and my head lad. And here are our nags."

"But tell me, Cutts, what do you intend to do with this tout-ing rascal?"

"Henry?" replied the trainer, with a broad grin. "Leave him to me. He shall be made comfortable enough."

"But, I say, look here, Cutts; you must not be tempted into committing a breach of the peace."

"Breach of the—excuse my laughing, my lord. Not for the world! We do not know what that means in Carlton Moffat. And as for our magistrates—they don't know what it means either. Ho! ho! Breach of the—dear me, no!"

They were the while trotting along in the track of the three sheeted thoroughbreds, one of which answered perfectly to the description of Dolly Mayflower, the mysterious flyer Winchester Harry had journeyed from town to run the rule over. Supplied by his quondam companion, the discharged stable-lad, with accurate descriptions of the tackle with which Dolly Mayflower was about to be tried, he experienced no difficulty in picking out two old acquaintances. Of course the reader already guesses that the clear-eyed tout is already on the spot. He is familiar with the ground, and has chosen a point of observation, which commands an excellent view of the mile-and-a-half stretch from end to end. He has been there for the last hour, and Cutts is aware of it, but for the present he keeps his knowledge to himself. As the five actors in the forthcoming trial pass the hidden watcher, Cutts and the head-lad exchange a glance, which—well, it would not have added to the comfort of Henry of Winchester, if he had seen it. But nothing that crosses his vision gives him cause for apprehension. He is so perfectly satisfied with the success of his arrangements for reconnoitring, and his security from observation, that he lights his pipe and indulges in a chuckling soliloquy.

"Ah! that chestnut is the colt he told me about. Of course they'll make runnin' with him. He is a fair demon at six furlongs. Then, that's old Slyboots. Many's the Queen's plate he's pulled off. The old beggar can stay as long as a lady in a milliner's shop. I wish Cutts 'd speak louder; with the wind this way, I might hear somethin' about the weights."

As if to favour the eager auditor Cutts *did* raise his voice, and the words which he uttered threw Winchester Harry into a perfect fever of excitement.

"I calculate my lord, taking the line through Slyboots—he had the measure of the Major's lot last week—that we have at least a stun' in hand. If she wins this trial it will be like puttin' in Lightning-Conductor at five stun' twelve."

"Of course I am delighted to hear it, Cutts, only I would not speak so loudly if I were you, we may be watched."

"Not we!—only let me catch anybody tagging us on these downs! I'd warn him, give him such a reception as I gave a tout they call Winchester Harry in Blazaway's year. I bet a pound to a shillin' he never forgot it."

"Cutts, you butcher," groaned the martyr referred to, "you are right. I have not forgotten it—and never shall. I wish to the lord I was out of this. It is not half good enough."

Meantime the three horses cantered down to "the post." Lord Billingham and his trainer, taking an elevated position opposite a point that represented "the distance," awaited in silence the answer which Dolly Mayflower was going to give to the question which her two adversaries would presently put.

"They are off!" exclaimed Lord Billingham and the trainer in a breath, the latter adding immediately afterwards, "and she is pulling Shrimp out of the saddle. No—it's all right. That lad rides well, my lord. Let the young 'un cut out of the work, but I'm damned if the mare has not the foot of him! Now for it, Shrimp; come on, catch Slyboots! He's done it, go on—there, what do you think of that, my lord, she's won with the weight of a hatful of ha'pence in hand, hard held. As she'll win on the day!"

"I hope so, I am sure, Cutts, and now we must lose no time before completing the sale."

"Pardon me, my lord, there is no hurry. All that in good time. Now, if you don't mind lending me a hand here—we can walk up to The Nest—I want Mather, that's my head lad, and Shrimp, to conduct a bit of business on my account."

With these words he dismounted, Lord Billingham in silent surprise following his example. The Shrimp and Mather having respectively descended from the saddles of Dolly Mayflower and Slyboots, proceeded with curious alacrity to replace the horses' clothing, in which operation they were aided by Cutts, and then, as though their hurrying was a matter of life and death, they severally leapt into the saddles which, the moment previously, Lord Billingham and Cutts had vacated.

"What does this mean?" queried his lordship in a tone of impatience.

"Pardon me, my lord, all in good time. You know, Mather. He has left his form by this, but you can head him off behind the furzes and run him into the rubbing-house."

"All right, sir," and off they galloped.

"Now, Cutts, I insist on knowing the meaning of this!"

"Presently, my lord, presently. Here Smith, lead the mare home and I'll follow with the colt."

"Lord Billingham, this is my domain, and like the man in the poem, 'my right there is none to dispute.' This trial has been touted."

"Touted!"

"Yes, touted, but I think by this time the artist who did the work, very possibly wishes he had never clapped eyes on the performance. Your man, and if you please (after you, my lord), my jockey, Shrimp, saw the tout last night, studying with great care a telegraph key. I saw him this morning taking stock of us.

So did Shrimp. And so did Mather. He is now on his way to the telegraph-office,—which establishment, he will not reach this day. By the time we have had some breakfast, Mather will be at the house with that key—

"But Cutts I cannot permit—"

"I repeat, my lord, that I am king here. I do not say it offensively, but you will recollect that Dolly Mayflower has not yet changed hands."

Lord Billingham made no reply. Cutts whose manner grew warmer as he went on, said—

"I am determined to be even with the lot of them. The man who works the Major's commissions, this Winchester Harry's first master, I found the other day had been tampering with one of my lads. Him I sent about his business, with what a Scotchman would term 'a sackful o' sair banes.' I have to reckon with his master now."

"Cutts," said the Earl, "I wash my hands of the whole affair, if I cannot win my wager fair and square."

"You can—and shall, my lord, only let me win mine. I have sworn to break the wretches, and by—break them I will!"

And how fared it with the emissary the while. With never a longing, lingering, look behind, he turned his face in the direction of Carlton Moffat. It was half-past six o'clock. At eight the telegraph-office would be open, at nine there was a fast train to town. Nothing could be better. Meanwhile, he would refresh his memory with a glance at that key,

But, hark! a sudden, yelping, panting sound

So terrible [to him] his heart stands still with fear,

And he is brought up short by a couple of daylight highwaymen, who wear the aspect of jockeys in undress, and who are mounted upon diminutive steeds of remarkable swiftness. He recognises in Shrimp one of his railway companions of the night before; in Mather a person of trust in the employment of Cutts the trainer. He takes in the situation at a glance, and is resolved to show fight. The jockeys dismount, to the grim satisfaction of the tout, who is clearly their match, one down and the other came on, without the ponies.

"Get out of the way. You can't cop me for trespassin'. Take out a summons."

"Go on! We on'y want you to stop, and dine along of us. Me and my pal here. I have told him what a proper sort o' chap you are, and he wants to know you."

"Get out of the way, or I'll—!"

"No you won't," replied Mather. By this time, thoroughly exasperated, the watcher of thoroughbreds made a rush at the taller of his assailants, but ere he reached any part of his person, his wild career was stopped by the interposition of the right foot of the Shrimp, and he paused for breath with his abraded nose in the centre of a forest of furze. On regaining his feet, he found himself confronted by half a dozen stable boys, who thereupon seized and hurried him into a rude tenement, erewhile devoted to the rubbing-down of perspiring thoroughbreds, and placed him in a sitting posture in the centre of the floor.

"Now," said Shrimp, who constituted himself the spokesman of the malcontents, "make yourself comfortable, and while they're a-brillin' the kidneys and rashers, and laying the eggs for your breakfast, give us a song. The beauty you warbled last night, you know—this, I mean," and dexterously plunging his hand into the recesses of the unhappy tout's breast pocket, Shrimp produced the key.

"Give it me back," roared Harry, with an oath. "You shall smart for this. It's a robbery."

"No, its a borrowing, that's all. Here, Mather, don't be long afore you get it by heart. He might want it."

Mather, with a satisfied grin received the portentous document and vanished—leaving the unhappy tout with his persecutors.

Through a fragrant veil produced by the smoke of an incomparable cigar, the Earl of Billingham complacently peruses the document which makes him the owner of Dolly Mayflower. The morning sun streaming in through a window that is adorned with the last roses of summer, bestow a kind of saintly interest on the puzzled head of Cutts, the trainer, who, pen in hand, is intently endeavouring to make use of the Winchester Harry's cabalistic key.

"Ah! the address and signature are already written. That is well. Now for the message; 'Trial came off,' um; *rule of three*, 'Dolly Mayflower,' *carrots and turnips*, um; 'beaten to blazes,' um; *omnibus*, um; 'by Slyboots,' um; *Moody and Sankey*. 'Very bad goods and not to be touched at any price.' *Bank of Elegance*."

In one hour from that the Earl of Billingham was on his way to town, and the following message from Henry Whittle, Carlton Moffat, to Seth Mangold, Imperial Club, Boswell Court, on the wires. *Rule of three dolly mayflower carrots and turnips omnibus Moody and Sankey bank of elegance.*

When the clubs closed it was found that somehow or other Dolly Mayflower had been backed in one hand to win a mint of money at the knocked-out price of thirty-three to one.

CHAPTER IV.

THE OCCIDENTAL HANDICAP.

It was well on in the Monday afternoon succeeding the memorable Saturday which had witnessed the tout's violent detention by Cutts's boys, that Winchester Harry, looking the picture of mental misery, turned up at Tattersall's, and recounted his woes to his horror-stricken employer.

"Do you mean to say that the message which I got at the club was a Barney?" queried Mr. Mangold, in a voice that sounded like a strangled shriek.

"Every word."

"Then the mare won?"

"In a walk. I suppose you gave her a peppering?"

"Peppering is no name for it! And the Major—I would not meet him at this moment for any money. But, stop. There has been very little doing to-day. Mivens, their commissioner, has not been here. I suppose they waited until I knocked the mare clean out on Saturday before they began to operate. Hollo! there is Mivens coming away. I'll draw him."

"Want to back Dolly Mayflower, Mivens?" he asked of the new-comer, in a tone of constrained joviality.

"Yes, I do. Will you lay?"

"Can't. Laid all my book, and a bit over, on Saturday."

"So I heard. Ah! well, it doesn't matter very much. I did without you."

"What do you mean by did without me?"

"Why, I waited this afternoon until you cleared out, and then I commenced proceedings. I rather fancied that your friend there," he continued with a sly smile—"might return from Carlton Moffat about this time and tell you the news; and as I feared it might get wind and spoil the market, I have helped myself to all the thirties, twenty-fives, twenties, and hundreds to seven I could get; and now, my fly friend, if you feel any desire to back Dolly Mayflower back again, just to make that volume of yours rather pleasant reading than it is just now, you will have to be precious quick, or you won't get ten to one!"

With a remark that would have been rude if rage had not made it inarticulate, the outwitted commissioner rushed from the presence of his Job's comforter, only to find from the lips of the now

rapidly-retreating members, abundant confirmation of his worst fears. He had to confess himself done on all sides.

It wanted but three days to the Westchester meeting, when the Earl of Billingham received a letter from his trainer, which ran as follows:—

"I want you, my lord, to leave the entire management of this business to me. We are not out of the wood yet. I shall start old Parsnip to make running for Dolly, and you must let me put up Twiss—I mean the Shrimp—to ride. Norton is at liberty; he is one of the best jockeys in England, and I have retained him for the mare. Leave everything to me until we meet at the scales."

This epistle puzzled Lord Billingham not a little. Short a time as he had been connected with the Turf, he had heard enough of Norton, and Norton's former dealings with the opposite party to make him uneasy. Nevertheless, he *did* leave everything to Cutts, and when on the first day of the meeting he saw by the papers that Fluker had come with a rush in the market and his own mare had gone back, he thought, "Well, if they think they can win let them back their opinion and welcome," and he dismissed the matter from his mind. He stood to win a raker, and he was resolved not to hedge a single penny.

The morning came. A card, damp from the printer's, was brought to his bedside. He greedily glanced at the programme, leapt hastily out of bed, and rang the bell with a violence that placed the wire in jeopardy.

"Come in! Send at once for—"

"May I come in my lord?"

"I was just going to send for you. Have you seen this?"

"Yes."

"And you know that—"

"Dolly Mayflower is not coloured. And when you get your morning paper you will find that she has not arrived."

"Not arrived! Cutts, I don't understand this."

"My lord, I begged of you to leave everything to me until we met at the scales. I repeat that request."

"Is there anything the matter? Now, then, out with it!"

"Yes—and no. There's a good deal the matter, as they'll find to their cost. Don't hedge a penny, my lord; and, if they should take any liberties—and it would not surprise me in the least to find Dolly driven back to an outside price—have a bit more on. Trust me."

"Cutts, I will; most implicitly."

"Thank you, my lord, you will never regret it."

They shook hands and parted.

While the touts were eagerly scanning the trains which stopped at Westchester, to duly note "the arrivals," at a little station on a branch line, which spread along the other side of the downs, a luggage train was relieved, unseen of watchers of any description, of a van which contained—Dolly Mayflower, and Cutts's head-lad! Meantime, at the scene of action, Fluker had been made favourite, Major Puffin's second string, Golden Horn, backed to win money, and Dolly Mayflower "sent about her business," notwithstanding the fact, as the reporters afterwards stated, "that her noble owner pluckily came to the rescue of his champion."

The weighing-room was surrounded by owners, trainers, book-makers, and bookmakers' scouts, who marked their cards as one after another of the field was weighed out.

"Now, Norton, what do you ride?—ah! I see—sage green, pink sleeves, belt, and cap—Dolly Mayflower? Lord Billingham's colours. Glad to see them back again, I'm sure."

"No, sir, that is not so. Those are the late Lord Billingham's colours. Norton was engaged to ride for me, and mine is Parsnip—but he does not run. Here is Dolly Mayflower's jockey, Twiss, jump into the scale."

It was Cutts who spoke, addressing the fussy little clerk of the scales. His words not only silenced the hubbub like a charm, but, for the moment, deprived Major Puffin's rubicund countenance of its conspicuous colour. That gallant officer turned on his heel and left the room, accompanied by Mangold. Lord Billingham, who had hitherto held aloof, now joined Cutts, and silently grasped his hand.

"All right; no, not exactly. Give him a half-pound cloth. That will do. You are fined for not declaring your colours, mind."

"Very good, sir. We shall get over that, I dare say. Now, Shrimp, come on. Mr lord, I have a hack waiting for you. Come with me, when I have attended to the saddling, and see them start."

It seemed as though there was new meaning in the roar, "They are off!" which rose from the ring when the flag fell. Lord Billingham levelled his binocular, but all he saw was a blurred blaze of colour; while he heard nothing, until, turning his hack's head in the direction of the weighing room—Cutts having left him—the sound of muttered objurgations smote upon his ear. 'Twas the voice of an unhappy backer.

"Can you tell me what's won?" was the question he put to that unsuccessful person.

"No, I can't, captain. His colour's not on the card; but I can tell what has *not* won, and that's Fluker."

That night Cutts unburthened his soul.

"Shrimp rode like an angel. Laid off for half the journey, and then stole up on the rails. Won cleverly by three parts of a length, Fluker second. I am rather partial to reading Shakespeare, my lord, and when The Shrimp told me that the colours you used to run in in India were so much like a pansy—primrose body, purple sleeves and belt, and purple cap—I thought I'd give them one. 'Pansies for thoughts,' you know! They saw the trial, they got at the jockey—as I meant they should—and we did 'em. 'Pansies for thoughts!' It will be a long, long time, before they forget THE JACKET OF THE EARL."

THE VOLUME OF LIFE.

BY THE LATE H. J. DE BURGH.

A volume there is called the Volume of Life; Seldom its pages exceed fourscore; Those pages teem with sorrow and strife, Yet they who read them still crave for more. A copy to each of the sons of men, As a matter of course, is, at birth, presented, He reads it through to the end, and then, He shuts the book, let us hope, contented.

You open the book, be you girl or boy, And may find the story pleasant enough, With its gladsome pages of Hope and Joy, Set clear in the golden border of Love; And over the chapters you laughingly skim, Though the tone of the later grows staid, my friend, Till you come to the page where the Printer Grim, In big black letters, has stamped—THE END.

The volume is well worth reading with care, But some o'er its sentences skim so fast, So little they grasp the dread meaning there, That they shudder and start as they reach the last; And in some copies—ah, the print is so bad— The tale such a tissue of sin and of tears, That the weary reader is all too glad When the Printer's FINIS at last appears.

"ANOTHER CHIP."

'Tis the old bay mare, the Master's pride,
Queen in her day of the country side;
Never a ditch so wide and deep,
A drop so dead, or a bank so steep,
Never an oxer, or stone-built wall,
But merrily, lightly, she topped them all.
Clever as kitten, and neat as paint,
In temper and courage "a perfect saint."

No day too long for the peerless mare,
Ready, aye, ready to do and dare;
Trotting to covert, with heart as light
As thistle down in its summer flight;
And still, at the close of the longest day,
Cheerfully picking her homeward way:
Scorning the mash till her journey's end,
With never a notion of "bellows to mend."

Oh! glorious prime, too quickly past,
Like ripened ear to the scythe at last
'Tis yours to bend—and the Queen of Chase
Must yield to another her pride of place.
Never again, ere the break of day,
To wend to the covert her lonesome way—
Never, in front ever pressing found,
To fly to the music of horn and hound.

Oh! better, thus with a grace to yield
While leader yet in the jealous field,
With never a fall to her rider given,
Never for spirit, for pace outstriven,
Than still, with failing heart and pace,
To follow, instead of to lead, the chase;
The wasted wreck of a noble life,
Fitter for ease than the toil of strife.

When the huntsman's nose is curled in scorn
To greet the violet, newly born,
The bold bay mare they have loosed from stall,
And led her to graze in the close by the Hall,
Where the sweet spring grass is a toothsome bite,
And the musical brook ripples clear and bright,
Murmuring ever of peace in store,
And warfare ended for evermore.

They have chosen a consort staunch and good,
Of the grandest shapes, and the bluest blood;
And there, in the days of shine and shower,
Have they sought by the forest a bridal bower,
And the weeks roll on to the hunter's moon,
But never they cumber with saddle or shoon,
Bridle or bit, the Queen of Chase,
And another reigns in the bay mare's place.

But March comes in on the cloudy wrack,
The east wind roaring behind his back,
Soon to be checked by the balmy west—
And the rook caws high on his windy nest;
From sheltering valley and rolling fold
Echoes are borne of the bleating fold,
And the bay mare whinnies, in conscious pride,
To the "strapping foal" at her winsome side.

'Tis the prime of the season, merry and brief,
Of rising wind and falling leaf:
And the white-heel'd colt, with argent blaze,
Has thickened and thriven in autumn days;
As big as a castle, as long as a town,
And, spit of his sire, of a good bay-brown;
And they've talked of the weaning for weeks, but still
He "noses" the teat at his own sweet will.

The dew lies thick upon yellowing blades,
And, bared of their glories, the forest glades
To dingle and thicket the hound invite,
In quest of the robber of roosts by night.
The whimper of Rex to a chorus swells,
Like voice of the bass to a peal of bells,
And a veteran (none of the season's birth)
Is setting his nose for a distant earth.

What is it nettles the bold bay mare,
Fixing her eyes with a startled stare?
Round to the fence at its farthest bound
She has wheeled, and halted to catch the sound,
What is the music of earth or spheres
To the melody striking her ravished ears?
Baying of pack on the chase intent,
And thunder of hoof the accompaniment!

Streaming away, like a pigeon flight,
The hounds have broke on her anxious sight,
Never a gap, nor a broken rail—
But a shake of the head and a switch of the tail;
And the "gate is past, and heaven is won"
With that wild leap—like dam, like son—
For, "chip of the old block," good at need,
The foal has followed the bay mare's lead.

"Chip of the old block"—after time
Shall see his promise of early prime
Filled to the full, and lusty spring
Her yearly gift to the Master bring,
Staunch, and clever, and bold as he,
King of the chase "in his ain countree;"
Worthy in looks and in deeds to wear
The sterling stamp of the old bay mare!

AMPHION.

A DINNER PARTY AT BRIGHAM YOUNG'S.

BY HOWARD PAUL.

FROM viewing incessant engravings and pictures of one sort and another, one has a tolerable notion of the general aspect of Naples, London, New York, Madrid, and other important places, but no person that I ever met formed anything like a correct idea of Salt Lake City. The fact is, it is exactly like no other place in the world, and there is only one town I have ever visited, that even reminds me faintly of it, and that is the little town of Aberdare, in South Wales. The city itself is built on a slope formed by a bend in the mountain range. Brigham Young's residence, the Tabernacle, and tithing-office, are all on the northern side, and enjoy a commanding prospect. The Tabernacle is an odd-looking building, devoid of any architectural beauty, and might, from its shape, be mistaken for a Hippodrome. It is hard by the Temple, which has been in course of erection for the last twenty years, and was only a few yards above ground when I saw it.

But I must not stop to describe the town, or my visit to the Tabernacle, or the wonderful specimens of the milliner's art to be seen at the services there; or the hops and balls, for the Mormons are the dancing-est people I ever met in my life.

The Theatre at Salt Lake City is a large comfortable establishment, with about the seating capacity of Drury Lane. The prices of admission vary from one dollar (four shillings, English) to twenty-five cents (a shilling), which is the lowest fee. There are few theatres in the English provinces so excellent in their interior arrangements, before, and especially behind, the curtain. The first night our little troupe appeared, the President (as Brigham was popularly called) attended, and his suite filled three private boxes. I was naturally very curious to see a man of whom I had heard so much. He sat in the box nearest the stage, was very attentive to the performance, and frequently applauded, especially the musical portion of the entertainment. Viewing the old Seer and Revelator from the *coulisses*, dressed as he was in a short gray business coat, he presented a stumpy stooping aspect; but, meeting him subsequently at dinner, I found he was a man more than six feet high, uncommonly broad, and muscular. He must have measured forty-five inches around the chest. His head was of moderate size, with strong developments of the basic and posterior regions of the cranium, and was by no means lacking in anterior breadth. His hair had been evidently chestnut (there were then "Silver Threads among the Gold"), was abundant in growth, and combed in pedantic style up into a fore-top on the right side. As I viewed him then and there, firmly grasping a great thick hook-handled stick, he looked for all the world like a healthy well-to-do honest old farmer of seventy years or more, who had brought his family to the play with the determination of having what the Americans call, "a good time." The old gentleman at this period had nineteen wives, fifteen of these being his own for time and eternity; the other four were "proxy wives," being widows of the distinguished author of Mormonism Mr. Joe Smith. His recognised children were estimated at fifty-two, but I was assured, on undoubted authority, that there were a few offspring scattered up and down the territory of Utah that had a serious right to call him "Daddy," but that the old Revelator did not yearn for the parental distinction. They have their own comical way of quietly squaring these little awkward family matters in the land of the Latter-day Saints. There is one thing perfectly certain—the Prophet did not know by sight all of his children. As they grew up, and altered in appearance, they frequently had to remind the President as to who they really were, and in the matter of names, his son-in-law, Mr. Hiram B. Clawson (a double-barrelled son-in-law, by the by, for he was wedded to two of Brigham's daughters) assured me that the "old gentleman got fearfully mixed." He was constantly mistaking the Jeremiah of one wife for the Jedediah of another, the Fanny of one family for the Susan of another, and on more than one occasion, when he was in a hurry or preoccupied by weighty matters of state, has asked the child he hastily addressed after the health of the wrong mother. This is one of the grotesque results of having unnaturally large families and being a Seer and a Revelator.

I bore a letter of introduction to the President from Brother Bywater, a Missionary of the Mormons, I had met in New York city, and the Prophet politely asked me to dinner. He did not send me the usual written conventional invitation, but came behind the scenes of the theatre during an *entracte*, inquired for my dressing-room, and was conducted thereto by the "call-boy," who was his own grandchild, being the son of the manager of the theatre, Mr. Clawson. Seating himself on a large trunk, he chatted intelligently about the play that was just over, and wound up a brief interview by expressing a hope that I would dine with him in an informal way the next day, at two o'clock, sharp, at Lion House.

Of course I went, as I was anxious to see the great man at home. Following the English habit, I got inside of a dress-coat, and the most formidable white tie that ever coiled round a layman's throat. I thought this snowy opulence of cravat would throw a clerical halo around me, and subdue my theatrical features to the level of the gravity of the people I was to meet. Alas! I was the only person of the party thus attired. Brigham wore an old brown hunting coat, seedy at the elbows, with by no means its proper complement of buttons. His wife, Amelia Folsom, who sat on his left side, wore a silk dress, plainly made, her only ornaments being earrings, a lace collar, and a locket suspended from her neck, containing a highly illuminated miniature of her burly husband. The lady was decidedly pretty, her forehead being broad, her eyes sparkling and expressive, complexion fresh, her hair rich and well dressed. The expression of her face was what a London swell would call "decidedly fetching," with just a suggestion of coquetry most agreeable, and as I glanced at her bright features, I thought how well I should like to engage her for a long Lecturing Tour in England, and post her all over the three kingdoms, in the boldest type I could find, as the

FAVOURITE AND BEAUTIFUL

13th WIFE

OF THE PROPHET, BRIGHAM YOUNG.

JUST ARRIVED FROM SALT LAKE CITY.

I saw, in imagination, this taking *affiche* in the hands of the irrepressible Willing, up and down London hoardings, side by side, with the "Greatest Circulation in the World," &c., and if Mrs. Amelia had "seen it" from the same point of view, and the old Revelator would have spared her for a season, there were sacks of ducats in the idea.

Another of the guests at dinner was a "proxy wife," Eliza R. Snow, whom the saints call *Miss Snow*. She was a lean, quaint-looking, bony old creature, dressed in a consumptive-canary coloured costume with fresh butter trimmings, and smelt dreadfully of camphor. I afterwards learned she was held in high estimation by the Church, as she was in the habit of travelling through the settlement of Utah, and urging the women to enter the "Celestial Order." The gentleman who sat by my side in-

formed me that she was only a "proxy wife" of our host, and would belong to Joseph Smith in the resurrection. I was glad to get the lady's exact status, or I might, as an outsider and a gentle, have put my foot in it, by asking some malapropos question.

The only gentlemen present were a Mr. Smith, whom Brigham introduced as "his historian,"—whatever that meant; another gentleman who had just returned from a tour in Japan, and who overflowed with anecdotes of the inhabitants of that curious island; and a third gentleman whose name I did not catch, but I gathered from his conversation that he was one of the Twelve Mormon Apostles, and had been to England on a foreign mission. The Apostle had brought his dog, "Jujube," with him, a shaggy yellow, ill-conditioned cur, whose back was the colour of cocoa-nut matting, and quite as rough. During the repast he fed this animal as promptly as though he had been an invited guest; and I'll do the dog full justice in saying he eat voraciously, and wasted no time in useless mastication.

The dinner was simple, but excellently cooked, and the asparagus and strawberries, packed in ice, had come all the way from San Francisco, by rail. Brigham, I noticed, partook very sparingly, and dedicated himself almost exclusively to a huge dish of tripe fried in batter, which he washed down with copious draughts of what he termed English ale. We also had a bountiful supply of Catawba and Angelica, the new California wines; and towards the end of the feast the Prophet uncorked a bottle of Clos Vougeot, that would not have discredited the well-selected *caves* of the *caf   Anglais* or *Bignons*.

The conversation was very animated at times, though the ladies spoke but little. The camphorated Miss Snow, lean as she was, owned a wonderful appetite, and wasted no words. Whenever she opened her mouth, it was to put something in it. Mrs. Amelia was very amiable, talked glibly on current topics, and begged I would pay a visit "to her new house with the mansard roof—the only one of that kind in Utah—that the President was building for her." She was very much interested in the English fashions, and particularly desired to know how the ladies wore their hair when I left London.

By the way, let me mention here, that an elder of the Mormon Church, and the husband of four wives, assured me one day, in conversation, that the women of Utah were deserting their primitive habits, and that the most subtle and formidable opponent of Mormonism and Polygamy was simply—Fashion.

"When I first came out here," said he with a sigh, "the women were content to dress in calico and stuffs. It cost a mere nothing to support half-a-dozen wives; but now, what with silks, satins, jewelry, and similar luxuries, it keeps a man poor to support one."

Of course it would have been wretched taste, at the dinner table of Brigham Young, to have sought information too curiously in regard to the tenets and working of Mormonism, and although there were passing allusions to religion in practical life, the fate of apostates, emotional piety, magnetic principles, saintly responsibilities, the power of the priesthood sealing by the Holy Spirit, news from Zion, and cognate topics, yet there was no sustained conversation, affording satisfactory enlightenment. I gleaned all my information in this respect outside.

There were only two scraps of information which fell from the lips of the Prophet worth recording. He remarked that in the southern towns of Utah, where the population is almost entirely Mormon, the women do not question the authority of the church, and regard polygamy as a special means of salvation; and I further heard him say to the gentleman who had visited Japan that it was "much more advantageous to sustain home productions at a higher figure than to purchase from abroad at a lower rate"—a fine old-crusted protectionist idea in political economy that would not enlist the support of Mr. Bright and the free traders on this side of the Atlantic.

I left Brother Brigham's table with the conviction that he was a shrewd practical man of *this* world, with a will of iron; but I was by no means prepared to endorse the sublimity and advantages of theocratic government. The community he dealt with were mostly uneducated common-place people, with a moral twist in religious matters. The best to be said of them was, they were thrifty, patient, and wonderfully industrious. The bulk of the rank and file I incidentally met in my walks abroad, had emigrated from Lancashire, Wales, and Sweden, but I noticed that the office-holders, and those who financed matters and "bossed things generally," were wide-awake down east Yankees.

At a subsequent interview with Brigham, I was struck with his scanty knowledge of books and literature. He cared little for reading. He reminded me of what Mark Twain once said of an acquaintance—"He is as unlettered as the other side of a tombstone." The old Prophet had a sense of humour, though, and, like most Americans, expressed himself, in felicitous terms. Exploring the misrepresentations his people were subject to, he asserted that much of the exaggeration grew out of a love of gossip, which he defined as putting two and two together and making five. In early life he earned his daily bread as a painter and glazier in the New-England State of Vermont. I could not resist the reflection that if Mormonism had not been invented, silly converts so plentiful, and possibly if the old Pasha had not a natural and erotic turn for polygamy and its sensual surroundings, the chances were, he might have gone on painting and glaziering in his native village to the end of his days.

A SKETCH AT THE LORD WARDEN.

BY J. ASHBY-STERRY.

Author of "Tiny Travels," "River Rhymes," "Shuttlecock Papers," "Boudoir Ballads," &c., &c., &c.,

O how she pouts o'er Bradshaw's Guide,
This dainty little two weeks' bride!
Pray has she found, on reaching Dover,
Her lot no longer-cast in clover?
Do honeymooning moments drag,
Or has she lost her dressing bag?
Perhaps she finds her golden fetter
Will bind her more to worse than better:
Perchance she mourns for kith and kin,
Or p'raps has lost her *Bound to Win*.
Or does my lady view with sorrow
The crossing over on the morrow?
Or does she mourn a by-gone love,
Or has she lost her left-hand glove?
Or is this blue eyed little sinner,
But waiting anxiously for dinner?
Perhaps she's difficult to please;
Perhaps she cannot find her keys.
I know not which, but it is fearful
To see those pretty eyes so tearful!
Her face, it cannot be denied,
Too sad is for a two weeks' bride!





THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK

DRAWN BY G. A. HOLMES.

THE ASTRONOMER ROYAL.

BY RICHARD DOWLING.

THE little village of Eastcliff stands on the sea at the mouth of the river Artane. The Artane here is three miles wide. At the Eastcliff side the land is bold, with great red rocks rising up out of the blue waters of the German Ocean.

On a height between the tiny harbour and the sea, stands the Red Head Hotel with its back to the ocean, and thither in May, came George Leighton, with the purpose of boating and fishing a good deal, and still more of doing nothing at all through the lazy days of summer.

He was about thirty years of age, unmarried, dark, quiet in manner, and possessed of a moderate independence. If he had been poor he might have made a name out of books, or of pictures, or of music, for he had refined sympathies and an elastic imagination. He had never taken the trouble to inquire whether he owned ability. He was not naturally vicious, and he had cultivated no important vice. He could lie all day smoking and looking at the sea, running over in his mind some delicate particles of verse. When it was dark, he could walk home, and after a few pages of Keats or Spenser, or even perhaps Rogers, go to bed, and feel quite contented as he fell asleep, and quite happy when he woke next morning.

The Red Head Hotel had few visitors before August. In May there were rarely as many as ten strangers staying there. It could house a hundred people, and in September it was generally full. For several years George Leighton had come early and stayed late. Sometimes on his arrival he found only three or four besides himself, sometimes he found a dozen. This May there arrived two persons about the middle of the month, Mr. Edward Waring and his daughter, Ada.

Mr. Waring was a tall thin man of about sixty, with a long pale face, and iron-grey hair and beard. He lived in a midland county, and had, until this year, seldom left his own residence. But with the winter of the previous year a heavy calamity had fallen upon him. He had lost his eldest daughter and his only son, and after them his wife soon passed away, leaving his hearth desolate, save for Ada, his second daughter, then nineteen years of age.

In his youth Mr. Waring had been passionately devoted to science. As years had gone over his head the taste developed almost to the exclusion of any other, and now, in the beginning of his old age, it was only by a supreme effort he could for a short time withdraw his mind from his beloved pursuit. He had never been a man of much activity or power of intellect. He never sought for anything new. The contemplation of discoveries made by others satisfied him, and he had gradually come to believe that because he was familiar with the works of scientific men he himself was one of the fraternity.

When his children and wife died the shock had stunned him. In the desolation of his despair, he plunged more deeply than ever into his old paths, and so the dreary isolation closed around Ada, until it seemed to her as though the whole world had drifted away from her, leaving her to brood in solitude among ruins haunted by the spirits of the past.

His recent family losses, working observedly in his half numbed brain, had produced a peculiar feeling with respect to his only surviving child. It seemed to him that she too would soon leave him for ever. He could not bring himself to believe that all the others had been taken and that she was to be spared. The solitude in which he had locked himself up, and the lonely nature of his pursuits, had deprived him of all power of invention outside the boundary of his books or his instruments, and with regard to her, as with regard to every other worldly thing or event, he looked upon himself rather as a passive spectator than a possible actor.

Guy's Hold had, when Richard I. was king, been a place of some strength. It was a small fortified castle, standing on a slight eminence in the middle of a great plain. Now the castle was all gone, with the exception of one square tower, which rose above the apple trees of the garden, and from the summit of which the fertile plain was visible, reaching far away to the four quarters of the compass. From the foot of this tower, towards a rippling pond of considerable extent, stretched a low, irregular brick cottage, the home of Mr. Waring and Ada.

In the top chamber of the square tower Mr. Waring spent nearly all his waking hours. Here he had his scientific books and instruments, the most remarkable of the latter being a large telescope passing through the roof, and so mounted as to admit of easy adjustment for observing a large area of the heavens.

When Mr. Waring was seeking to forget his losses among intricate mazes of facts and calculations in the tower, Ada in the house was nourishing her sorrows.

The colour faded from the girl's cheek, and a strange unaccustomed dulness stole into her eyes. She grew listless and silent. She would sit for hours without word or motion, and at length she answered questions in but the briefest manner, and sometimes not at all. Mr. Waring noticed none of these changes, but Martha, the elder of the servants, did, and spoke to Kate, the other, and the two agreed that "Miss Ada" was following the rest, and that the old man would see nothing until it was too late. So they plotted that Martha was to go to the doctor, explain how matters stood, and ask him to call as a friend, and then prescribe as a physician. He came, declared she was suffering from premonitory symptoms of melancholia, and ordered immediate change of scene.

So it was that Mr. Waring came to leave the Hold and travel through England with his daughter, Ada, during the months of March and April, and in May arrived at the Red Head Hotel, Eastcliff, intending to stay there a month.

When he found himself once more launched on the world he at first felt confounded and timid; but after a few weeks, as soon as he discovered that people were disposed to be polite, and even kind to himself and his daughter, he ceased to regard them with aversion, and in the end treated all strangers as though they were continuations of his own family. He took them freely into his confidence, and spoke to them with minute candour on the only two subjects he was master of, science and his domestic troubles.

The ingenuousness of the old man, his fond faith in the interest average people took in abstruse problems, and the moving spectacle of the faded girl wrought powerfully on people, and while they somewhat dreaded and shunned his prolix monologues on stalagmites or asteroids, they listened with untiring sympathy to the history of his bereavement, and they moved about the delicate girl with soothing words and offerings of tender services.

At the Red Head Hotel there were few to talk to that month of May, so that Mr. Waring, before a week was over, had communicated to George Leighton a vast quantity of scientific technicalities, which the latter did not understand, and all the facts of his troubles, which the young man did understand, and in which he even took an indolent interest.

Ada Waring was not the kind of girl to attract the attention of a man of Leighton's temperament. She was rather under the medium height, very slender, with long thin hands, a dull pale emaciated face, black hair and dark brown eyes, dulled by the early touch of the malady which hung around her. Ada was plain, and Leighton thought her plain, though he did not express

the matter to himself, but rested contented with looking at her sadly, and saying to himself, "Poor child! I think the mind or the soul will soon go."

After a few days more had passed, he began to think of the case from a purely medical point of view, for he had read some books in that science. Like all amateurs in medicine, he claimed intuitive insight and undeviating justice in his treatment.

"You know," he said to himself confidentially one day, as he lounged along the deserted pier with a cigar in his mouth, "that old man is the very worst companion she could have. He's always on pre-Adamite umbrellas, or the milky-way, or the griefs of the past year, and the poor girl hasn't a chance between the three, but the umbrellas and the milky-way are the worst."

The next day he had got farther. "If there were any chance at all it would be with some hoiden. Some boisterous harem-scarem miss who wouldn't stand not being answered, and wouldn't take any refusal from this girl, when mischief could be done by their joint labour."

That night he looked into some books, and found confirmation of his theory. Then he became arrogant and angry.

"A fool," he cried in his heart, "couldn't find or invent a worse companion than her father. He'd make a Bedlamite of a navy in six weeks. I wish some spiteful boarding-school misses would turn up here, and I'd soon enough set them at the poor child."

At breakfast he felt a strong disposition to expostulate with the old man; but he was too angry by this time to take interest in anything but his own anger, so he kept silent. In the afternoon another stage was reached.

"I can't bear to see that child dying before my eyes, and hear that old man droning on about buttons of the 25th Regiment of the Line, found in the silurian formation, and the sulphuretted hydrogen of factory chimneys corroding the silver in the fixed stars. I wish to goodness some—some bloated schoolboy of one-and-twenty might be banished here, and if I wouldn't make him dance attendance on her, and teach her to shudder at his laughter, my name isn't Leighton."

After a few more days of anger, and a few more looks into the books; "I have always," he mused, "thought I should make an excellent physician; I am so quick to see means towards ends. Here is a chance. Am I an utterly mistaken man, or is there anything in my boast; I feel it to be like murdering her to leave her as she is, poor child. I'll give it one week's chance, and then if no progress be made, I'll leave the place, for I can't stay and see the pale faced little thing slain with Jupiter's satellites, and the perverted electrical currents in the Thames tunnel."

For a whole week he devoted a good deal of his time to trying to rouse Ada; but the result was very slight. He had half terrified her into answering him somewhat more quickly than others, and once or twice he had made her smile faintly.

"I have been treating her homeopathically," he thought; "she is a subject for the heroic style. It doesn't do to be over tender with desperate cases. I'll increase the quantity and the frequency of the doses." Then he looked again into the books, and a brilliant idea occurred to him.

"I'll give her some sail boat. That's the thing for her!"

"I think, sir," he said to Mr. Waring, one morning, "your daughter wants not only air and exercise and change of scene, but a little rousing up as well."

"Exactly," cried the old man, in a tone of excited conviction. "Exactly, that's what my doctors said. I try to do all I can. I tell her of all the marvels—"

"Of course, sir, the marvels of science are admirable things and are most interesting and—soothing. It has occurred to me that, in addition, a little sailing might be beneficial. Will you and Miss Waring give me the pleasure of showing you some of the cliffs and caves about here?"

"My dear sir, I fear it would put you to great inconvenience."

"Not at all. For instance, I am going for a sail to-day. Will you come—please do. I love to show people the wonders of our coast."

"You are far too kind. We will gladly go. Did you say there were caves? Are any remarkable for stalagmites?"

"Oh, yes! Several. Can you and she be ready at eleven? We'll go and see some of the stalagmites. In the meantime, I'll run down and get the craft cleaned up."

They went that day, and every day during the week, and when the week was over the sea breezes had washed a faint pink into the delicate cheek, and the limpid brightness of the May sea had cleared some of the dullness out of the faded eyes. He had even got her to answer questions freely now. While they were in the boat he kept up a continual fire. He sang out exaggerated orders to the men, and told preposterous stories of the places they passed. He deliberately teased her. He sprinkled water on her hand, and threw her glove overboard, and then offered to swim for it. One day he had four live crabs in the boat, and pushed them continually towards her, until he made her quite uncomfortable. He placed two of them in his hat, sent them adrift, and came home in a boatman's sou'-wester. He brought a pistol and a pie-dish, set the pie-dish on the water, and insisted on her firing at it until she broke it; and then demanded and made her pay him tenpence compensation. He called her by her Christian name, and protested that he was her uncle, and complained that her manner towards him lacked deference. The old man sat in smiling approval of all this, and even now and then so far forgot stalagmites and nebulae as to join in Leighton's attempts to stir the sluggish current of her mind.

At the end of the third week, George Leighton cried triumphantly to himself, one night: "She's growing to hate me! She's growing to hate me. Now am I not a success?" and rubbing his hands gleefully, he walked up and down his room.

The manifest improvement in Ada induced Mr. Waring to prolong his stay, and towards the middle of June, George Leighton got a large scrap-book, and commenced forming a collection of sea-weed.

One long, slow-fading evening towards the close of June the two were as usual on the beach. The foreground of the beach consisted of pebbles, beyond this a low bed of rocks stretched out far. The sky was a dull quiet grey. Overhead some tardy sea fowl were sailing through the tranquil air. Leighton was sitting on the pebbles beside a newspaper on which was spread the evening's harvest. Not a soul but the two could be seen. She was a short distance off, stooping over a little pool. He had sent her to gather pale green sea-moss, and he had been more than usually precise in his description of what he wanted. Suddenly he heard her utter an exclamation, and looking quickly towards her, saw her standing quite erect, facing him. Before he had time to move, she called out with a gay laugh:

"Oh, uncle George! I've found a crab."

He sprang to his feet, pale with excitement. He had never heard her laugh before. He had never heard her volunteer a word before. Was she cured?

He beckoned to her eagerly, crying, "Ada! Ada, come here!"

"Not without the crab. I'll bring him in my handkerchief."

Was she cured? Could it be that the cloud had lifted at last, and the clear blue was visible?

He hastened to her, and taking both her hands in his, looked into her eyes. They were clear and bright, with just a flicker of doubt in them still.

"Let us go home," he said, retaining one of her hands to help her over the rocks,

"So early!" she pleaded. "We often stay later than this, and I haven't got the green moss."

"No matter; come. Your father will be anxious."

In an instant a great natural sadness came into her eyes. She stood, and drawing his hand across her bosom, whispered, "Uncle George, I feel some change. The ground used to seem soft and far away, now it is firm and near. What has happened?"

"You have been ill."

"And am I well now? Have I got suddenly well?"

"Yes, thank God!"

She let his hand fall, and side by side they walked back to the hotel without other words. When they arrived, he led the way to the room where Mr. Waring sat, opened the door for her to pass in, closed it after her, and going out again walked swiftly along the cliffs until the stars came out, then he sat down. The new morning was in the East before he returned.

What George Leighton felt that night was a tumultuous gratitude mingled with a dreary sense of loss. He had never bestirred himself in all his life before; the object of his brief activity had been attained. He shouldn't very well know what to do with his time now.

In the reasonable light of day he apostrophised himself. "Look here, George Leighton, if you only took out a diploma in medicine you'd be a baronet three years after, and in another three years you'd have half a dozen emperors every day sitting in your waiting-room with their guineas in their hands."

After that memorable evening, the relations between Ada Waring and George Leighton altered considerably. He gave up calling her by her christian name, and she called him Mr. Leighton. He went out with the girl alone no more.

Towards the close of July, Ada's health being now almost perfectly restored, the old man and his daughter left Eastcliff for France. They were to return to Guy's Hold in the first week of September, and thither George Leighton had promised to go on a brief visit.

"I am greatly afraid," he thought, "that when she gets back to that place, and falls into the dull monotony of her former life, she will relapse into the old condition. So I'd better accept the invitation, and see how she goes on for a while."

There were flaws of autumnal gold in the green wood around Guy's Hold when he arrived. The old man seemed just the same, only looking a little more sunburnt.

Ada's physical health had much improved. There was now a full tide of vivid colour in her cheeks, and he could see deep down into her eyes; but at the bottom there lay something like a crouched fear, and he made the reflection that as sure as there is daylight at noon the influence of the place would work prejudicially against the girl.

At the end of the week, he one morning at breakfast declared his intention of going the next day. Mr. Waring protested warmly, and begged him, if he had no pressing engagement, to extend his stay. "I know it is but a dull place for a young man," he said, "but, Mr. Leighton, you cannot believe how grateful we are to you, and how much we wish you to stay—don't we, Ada?"

She did not speak, but raised those dark brown eyes to him in piteous appeal. As he caught her glance, he saw a strange, a new dread in her eyes. What was it? What was the new fear which disturbed their lucid depths?

He did not dare to answer the question he had put to himself, but shook himself rudely, and replied to the father, "Well, I have nothing very pressing. I'll tell you this evening if I can remain."

After breakfast Ada and he went out. They wandered hither and thither for hours. She trod on a pine-cone, and stooped to pick it up. As she did so he said, "Miss Waring, I think I had better go to-morrow, as I was saying at breakfast."

She rose swiftly, and looked at him with those deep, terribly-troubled eyes, and cried, in a voice of entreaty—

"Oh, Uncle George, don't go!"

He sprang to her, caught her hand, and muttered in a strange thick voice, "No, I won't go. You'd be too horribly lonely here by yourself."

She took her hand out of his, and walking side by side through the fallen leaves, they reached the house without exchanging another word.

The scene was almost a repetition of the one on the beach at Eastcliff, with this difference, that there her malady passed away, here it seemed to show signs of returning.

He was ten years older, and he felt a kind of fatherly interest in the poor child; he also had an interest in her as his patient. She wasn't pretty, but she was full of gentle goodness. He would have liked to see some bright ideal youth come and stay, and gradually teach the pulses of her heart to make music to his voice. How deliciously sweet, love would be to that timid girl, who now dwelt under a portentous cloud! How her heart would open, like a flower to wooing sighs. How the arms of a strong and tender man would console and strengthen her. By an unobserved series of thought, he arrived at the conclusion that she had made up her mind no man would ever hold her hand unduly, or explore her eyes for secrets. The subject had never been touched upon between them. Once she had said she should live always at Guy's Hold. He had asked why. She had answered because her father liked the place. Then he had said, "But some broad-shouldered boy will come across the fields in spring, and steal you away through the lanes, and never let you go from his side afterwards."

To this she replied neither by look nor gesture, but kept her eyes on the ground. But he watched her and he felt she was keeping down sighs.

How he should like to sit apart and see the love-light dawning and strengthening in poor Ada's eyes!

He agreed to prolong his stay, and even fixed no limit to it. When the weather was fine they walked out; when it was wet they sat within, and read, or had music, or played chess. It wasn't a very exciting life for a young man, but then George Leighton was one of those who supply necessary excitement from within.

After the little incident at the base of the pine-tree, his manner changed altogether. He told her stories of places he had seen, and men he had known. Of women and love he spoke much. He related the careless treatment women had shown to good men of his acquaintance. One had loved a girl to distraction, and she had jilted him for a richer suitor; another gave up her lover because he would not abandon some men he had associated with all his life. A third put an end to an engagement because some one said they had seen the man civil to another woman. He dwelt upon the weaknesses and foibles of the sex. He declared women to be incapable of having half the love for people that they entertained for things. He called them slaves to exterior, scornors of the noble faculties of men.

Then he assured her he had no mawkish chivalry in his nature. He had never made a fool of himself about any girl. He never made love or said civil things to any woman, for he knew that without one solitary exception they either laughed at the heroics of men, or used the fools who indulged in them merely to fetch and carry, or render unmanly obedience.

"Oh, no!"

He knew better. What could she, shut up from the world here know about men and women? He had studied the subject, and all women were grossly selfish, vilely vain.

“What dreadful things to say.”

They were truths, and she would find out that they were truths when she had met more women.

Were men all angels?

No, far from it. But they were sounder at the core than women. If he was hard on women he was just to them. Personally, he was most just. He had never flirted in all his life.

What exactly was flirting?

Deliberately acting towards a woman so as to arouse hope you had no intention of realising for her.

“Ah!”

What?

She didn’t mean anything, only she had never before heard what flirting was put so plainly.

Did not the definition seem just?

Perfectly just.

He had never flirted. He looked upon it as cruelly wicked. Though he had little respect for the intellect or affections of women—

“Oh, shame, Mr. Leighton.”

Though he had little respect for the intellect or affections of women, he would not be so base as to deceive any woman into thinking he cared for her when he did not. He meant care for, in the sense of love. Of course he cared for herself a good deal.

He had been far too good to her, and she could never thank him enough.

Don’t talk folly! Of course he cared for herself a good deal, and took a most profound and cordial interest in her. Should he illustrate what he felt towards her by telling her of a waking dream he had of her future?

If he liked.

While this conversation was going on between them they were standing on a hand bridge, watching the yellow waters hurrying beneath. Huge piles of cold grey clouds hung over head. There was no wind. Now and then a brown leaf fell with sharp faint rattle through the sapless boughs. She rested both her elbows on the low rail, and as he began to speak dropped her chin into her hands. He drooped slightly forward, and spoke in a deep, soft voice:

“It is like a vision, Miss Waring, and I think it must have appeared to me, because I imagine you would be happy in it, and as there is no girl in whom I take a greater interest than you, there is no girl I should like so much to see happy.”

He bent a little more forward as he spoke, so that his eyes were directed across her face and could see it without looking directly at her. As he spoke he twirled his dark moustache, and seemed to fix his gaze on a bend of the stream. He went on:

“I see a broad, blue, southern river; on either side tall sedges, and then limes, and beyond the limes blue hills, and above the deep southern blue, and in the west the sun, and on the river the lazy purple blue of southern streams. You like the south, Miss Waring?”

“Yes.”

Her voice was low and dull. The deep romantic spirit of the girl, which in her grief had turned to melancholy, had of late changed, and she was now listening eagerly; like youth, waiting without the gates of his dreams, and hearing imperfectly the music he had imagined and fore-ordered for his career.

“In the middle of this stream I see a boat, with an amber sail hanging idly in the barren air. In the stern of the boat, on a kind of wicker couch, lined with dark purple, two figures are sitting, those of a man and a girl. The girl has dark brown lustrous hair, and dark deep brown eyes, and a fair forehead, and very fair hands. Do you recognise the portrait, Miss Waring?”

“Go on.”

Her eyes were now burning and her cheeks tingling. She felt she was trembling, and durst not say more. With her elbows she pressed the hand-rail of the bridge against her bosom to steady herself.

“She is reclining, and they are sitting lover-like, his arm around her, her hand in his. I can hear what he says, and it is this—‘Ada, you shall be loved, not with the hot and hasty love that dies before the trees are twice green, not with the love which desires its own end, but with the love which desires only your happiness. My great happiness will be in knowing that you are happy with me. And, Ada, you shall not love me with the foolish love of an idle-hearted girl. Your great joy will be in knowing you are so unspeakably precious to me. So each shall think and act through the other, and not for self. As we sit here no sweeter thought visits me than that my Ada desires of all things to be here. When I take your hand, when I cherish you in my arms, when I touch your lips, the most exquisite happiness man can feel I feel in knowing my Ada’s heart is full of happiness’

when I take her hand, when I cherish her in my arms, when I touch her lips. That, Ada, is the kind of love to endure, and you must love me as I love you, not because I am anything strangely love-worthy, but that you may be as deliciously happy as love can make woman. You must and shall love me utterly, for to love utterly is the most precious and enduring of pleasure man or woman can know on earth; and I shall make you love me as I say, that you may have the fullest cup of happiness life affords.’ Some speech like that the lover is making to the girl in the boat as they float on the purple blue waters, and the airs above drop garlands of perfumes upon them. Miss Waring, why don’t you laugh? Do you not see the man is an idiot?”

“I don’t know.” Here was her fairy land at last! Here was her enchanter at last! Had the last been reached? Who was the man in the boat? Did any such man live? An idiot! an idiot! An idol, he must have meant. Oh, convention! . . . She felt a little dizzy, as though she should faint, but the trembling was gone.

“Should you like to see his portrait? He is very clearly before my eyes now.”

No answer. But now the red blood was dashing through her head and neck, and her heart beat so that she had to relax the pressure of the rail against her bosom.

“A tall, broad shouldered, light haired, light moustached Saxon, with light grey eyes and a deep manly voice. Miss Waring, Miss Waring, are you ill, I thought you were going to fall.”

“I feel a little ill. The water has made me giddy. Please take me home.”

After this three or four days passed without any circumstance noteworthy.

Towards the close of October there came a long procession of silver moon clad nights, when all the unapparelled woods lay like frozen fret-work against the frigid air. Mr. Waring had often urged George to spend an hour or two in the tower, watching the moon, and noting the romantic chasms that bit into its surface, like the sun wasted crevices in an iceberg. At length Leighton agreed to go.

The night he selected, Mr. Waring was deeply engaged in some calculations, which he was exceeding loath to leave. “But,” he said, “Ada understands the telescope. She can set it for you. Ten is the best time, from ten to eleven.”

The tower contained five small chambers, one on each floor. The top floor was the observatory. A circular staircase on the inner angle of the tower afforded the means of ascent.

He led the way up. It was utterly dark. When they had got about a third of the way he said, “Miss Waring, do you know why they call the moon she?”

“Because she is so beautiful.”

“Not at all. The sun is more beautiful. Because she is so cold. She is a fireless lamp. She looks wonderfully beautiful, but there is no warmth in her nature. We love her, but she returns none of our love. She smiles a cold, clear, empty smile that drives men mad; and yet they know from their earliest experience she will never warm towards them. That is the reason the moon has been called she.”

“Will he never say a good word of women,” she moaned to her heart. Suddenly an impulse moved her, and she asked, hotly, “Do you know why they call the sun he?”

“No,” he answered, with a laugh.

“Because he warms first and withers after.”

“That, Miss Waring, is the cleverest thing you have ever said in my presence. But please don’t say anything like it again. I hate clever women.”

“And you despise dull ones.”

“And I despise dull ones, as you say.”

They arrived in the little dark observatory. Ada drew aside a curtain hanging before a loophole. A polished dagger of moonlight struck the floor, and made a faint luminous smoke-quiver in the room.

To right and left there were scattered a great confusion of brazen and glass and japanned instruments, of which it was impossible to see more than the outlines facing the light. At the foot of the telescope was a space free from encumbrance, except a large, old-fashioned hall-seat to accommodate two. This had rounded ends, and a single rail at the back. It was placed directly under the telescope, and used by Mr. Waring. There was no other seat in the tower.

The only light was the long, slender shaft of moonlight, and the blue-grey mist born of it, which pervaded the spaces lying open towards the light.

She knew where to find the moon, and soon swung the great tube into position.

“Now,” she said, “sit down and look.”

“But will not you look first, Miss Waring?”

“Thank you, I have seen it often before.”

“But you will sit down, surely. I can’t sit down and let you stand.”

“There is but one seat, and you must sit to look.”

“But there is room for two on the seat. Don’t make me more ungallant than I am willing to be, please.”

Without a word she sat down at the end further from the telescope, he in the line of the slender pencil of light coming through the tube. The seat was so short that they could not avoid touching one another. He applied his eye to the glass. There was a silence of some seconds. He broke it.

“I dare say your father thinks the Astronomer Royal the man most to be envied in the world?”

“He has a great respect for him.”

“I dare say your father’s daughter is pretty tired of astronomy?”

“Oh, no! I like it.”

“And you, too, have a great respect for the Astronomer Royal?”

“I don’t know much about him. I suppose he must be a very clever man.”

“He, I suppose, sometimes finds a new splinter of a star, or hair from the tail of a comet in the sky.”

“I dare say,” with a laugh.

“I’m going to change the direction of the telescope, turn Astronomer Royal for a while, and try to find out something new.”

“There’s too much light in the sky. It’s a bad night.”

“Well, I’m going to try. There! I’m off the moon now. I can see a dim haze of faint blue light. If I find anything new in that haze will you be surprised?”

“Very much indeed.”

“May I tell you all I see?”

“Certainly.”

“And you won’t laugh?”

“No.”

“Nor interrupt me?”

“What a question! You will find nothing.”

“You promise?”

“I do.”

“The mist is clearing gradually away. . . . It has cleared away altogether now, and instead of the dark blue sky, I see once more that Southern river, that boat with the amber sail and the two lovers.”

She started, said nothing, and breathed quickly.

“But there is a change. He is no longer the light-haired man of my former vision, but dark, and like some one I know very well.”

She was trembling violently now.

“I can see that he loves her very tenderly and very truly. That he would lay down his life to save her from pain, or live a laborious life to secure her happiness. He whispers in her ear, ‘My Ada, I have loved you longer than you can suspect, and if I did not speak earlier it was because I thought perhaps you would not be as happy with me as with some other man. I have no longer any such doubt; for I now believe that no man could feel so passionate a longing to take you in his arms and shield you against danger, always setting your happiness above all earthly things.’

A sob.

“How powerful this telescope is. It brings the two nearer every second. They are quite close now.”

Another sob.

“They are closer still. Stop! They have disappeared. Disappeared from the telescope. But they are here! They are here, Ada! They are here!”

“Sir, last night in the observatory I thought I’d turn Astronomer Royal, and try to make a discovery?”

“Well?” with a smile that forgave the folly because of the enthusiasm.

“And I found something.”

“Found something! You don’t say so?”

“I found a want.”

“A want! Good gracious, Mr. Leighton, what do you mean? You did not find a want in the moon?”

“No, Mr. Waring, but in my life I found my own want of Ada.”

It took a long time to make the old man understand. In after years George always said he had to make a diagram of the moon, the telescope, and the situation on the seat before his father-in-law could comprehend; but that was only one of his ways for making Ada smile; he had a thousand others.

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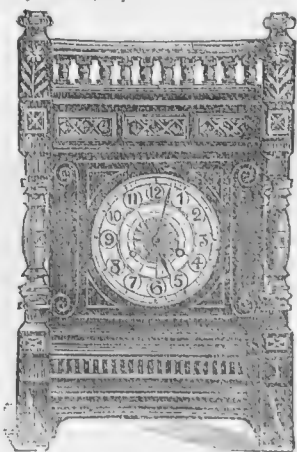
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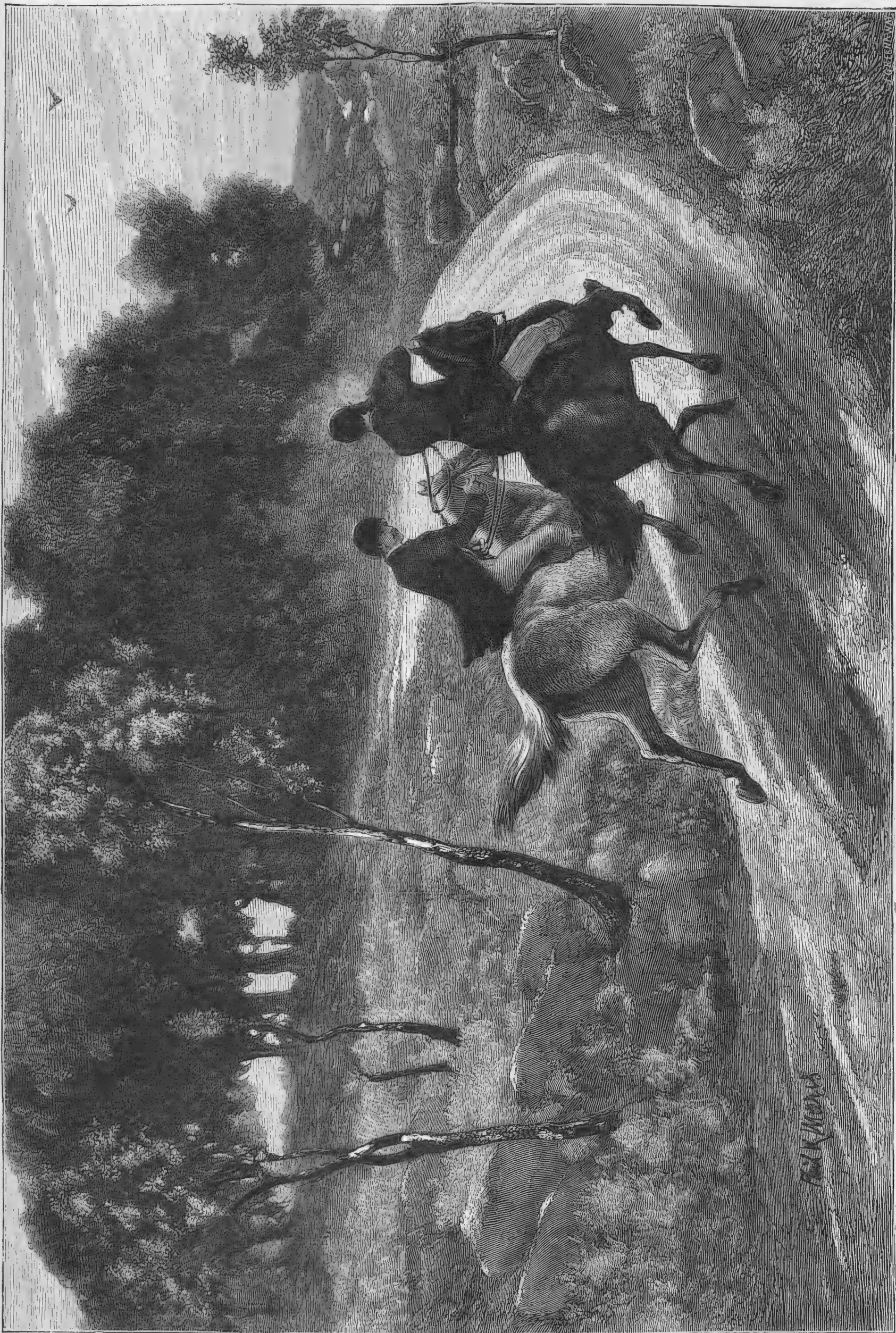
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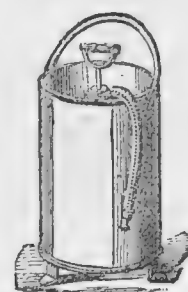
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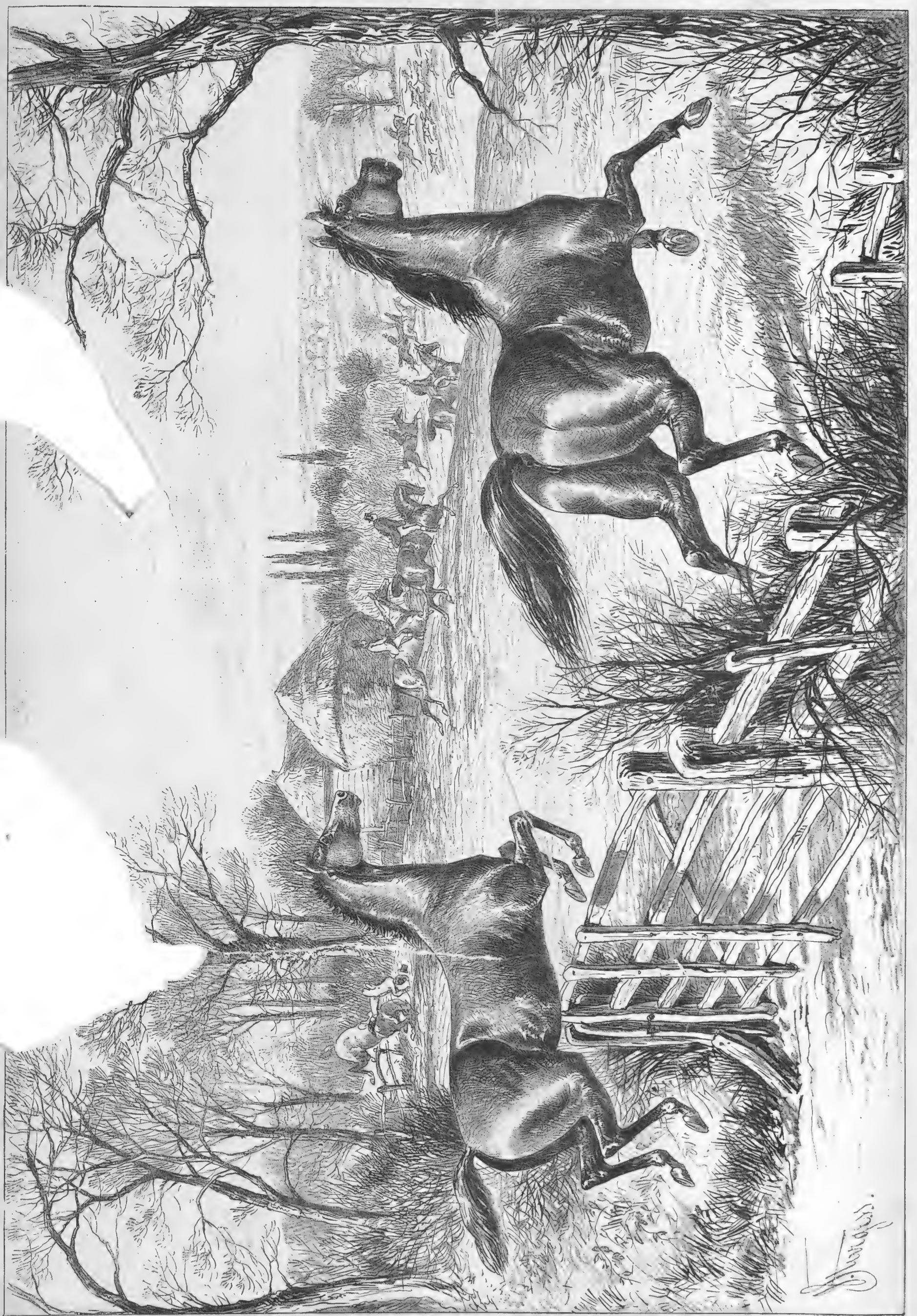
IN "NOTES on CONSUMPTION and WASTING DISEASES SUCCESSFULLY TREATED BY HYDRATED OIL," with cases showing the immediate increase in weight produced by it," published by Diprose, Bateman, and Co., Sheffield-street, Lincoln's Inn-fields.

G. OVEREND DREWRY, M.D., Physician to the National Free Dispensary for Consumption and Wasting Diseases, Gower-street, W., Author of "Common Sense Management of the Stomach," &c.,

REFERRING to CASES TREATED at the NATIONAL FREE DISPENSARY for CONSUMPTION and WASTING DISEASES, says that

"**HYDRATED OIL** produces an effect such as neither cod liver oil nor any preparation of it with which I am acquainted even faintly approaches."—Page 23 and on page 21.

"**PATIENTS** are unanimous in their statement that the appetite is much increased by taking 'hydrated oil,' and that so far from possessing the unpleasant taste of ordinary cod liver oil, the taste of 'hydrated oil' is agreeable rather than the reverse, and is described by some as resembling Devonshire cream. These, I submit, are



ANOTHER "CHIP!"—DRAWN BY JOHN STURGES.

"DREAMING OF WAGNER."

By GEORGE GROSSMITH JUNIOR.

I HEARD a strain of music, 'twas a most delightful strain,
It died away in midnight air—and then it came again;
'Twas weird and wild and yet so sweet. I could not understand
It's composition, but it seemed to come from Fairyland.

No Christmas Chimes were half so sweet as that delicious sound,
With harmony as pure as was the snow upon the ground;
And then the music louder and yet louder still did grow,
Until it likened to some Mighty Oratorio.

And then the sound grew more distinct and soon the midnight
air
Was filled with such discordant notes as mortal scarce could
bear;
I thought around me demons played; I clasped my hands with
fear,
Unearthly trumpets roared with might, and deafened was each
ear.

I gave a scream and started to my legs I know not how,
Enormous beads of perspiration stood upon my brow.
"Good night, a Merry Christmas to you all." Oh! Bless the
fates.
'Tis useless to disguise it—I was frightened by the Waits!

THE BRAZEN BOOTJACK.

By GODFREY TURNER.

THEY have an amiable way of saving law costs at Trübenheim, and indeed throughout the whole length and breadth of the grand Duchy of Staubregensburg. In speaking of law costs as I do with fitting solemnity, I must be understood as referring to civil actions only. No doubt, if people in Stanbregensburg are so criminally foolish as to be found out in doing wrong, or are so unfortunate as to be charged with crimes which they never even dreamed of committing, they will have to fee counsel and attorneys with all the money they can scrape together; and it is a noble attribute of the lawyers of Trübenheim, that if you have less than enough to meet their demands in full, and will demonstrate to them as a certainty that you have not a penny more in the world, they will charitably take all you have, and leave you in debt for the remainder.

Putting the criminal law of Staubregensburg on one side, as an unknown quantity with which we need not particularly trouble ourselves just now, I will simply repeat, that in civil actions the costs are avoided at Trübenheim. How do they do it? Why, by avoiding the actions themselves. How do they do that? Patience awhile, and you shall see. Many men of business, in that town, and in other towns of Staubregensburg, are also men of some leisure. It is a very quiet place, where everybody has a good allowance of spare time, and where some have more than they know what to do with. Men of leisure, who deem themselves men of ability, like to be thought men of consequence; and it happens that a sensible old custom of Trübenheim admits the better class of tradesmen to the dignified status of men of law. If they choose to call themselves counsellors or advocates, they may do so, by virtue of helping gratuitously to settle the disputes of their neighbours, and keep them out of the law courts, by the amicable and inexpensive process of arbitration.

Zacharias Seifenschaum was one of those same leisurely busybodies, dwelling in the town of Trübenheim. He had gained a handsome competency by cropping the hair, trimming the whiskers, and scraping the chins of the Burgesses; for Trübenheim, as you know, is one of those old-world places where riches are slowly but surely accumulated, in a humdrum way, by humdrum people, who take what comes and are careful to keep it. His family was small; he had a small wife, and a small, though full-grown, daughter, neither of whom gave him any trouble. They were placid, thrifty, frugal, neat, good-tempered, and, above all, obedient to his dictates, and prompt in the execution of them. He was their gentle despot, so that, paraphrasing a well-known line of poetry, they might have said:

And duty draws us by a single Herr.

Only, you will say, in this case the Herr was not single.

This Jephtha of Trübenheim, with one fair daughter and no more, had sat in judgment so long on the affairs of his friends and neighbours that he thought he would indulge himself, as well as Frau and Fräulein Seifenschaum, with a vacation ramble. It was a flat country in which they lived; but within a reasonable journey, mountains, valleys, lakes, and forests were all before them where to choose. They chose: or rather, the choice being left to Herr Seifenschaum, he pitched upon a picturesque spot near the Grand Ducal domain, and his docile wife and daughter smilingly assented, as they would have done if he had proposed a visit to Halifax or the Isle of Mull. Nothing could be better than Rauchenbad, said Frau and Fräulein Seifenschaum; so the small family set about preparing for the trip.

First of all they bought a Bædeker's guide-book, for the locality they intended visiting. All German tourists buy Bædeker, just as English holiday-makers who are off to the lakes or the Trossachs, fortify themselves with Black or Murray. The volume purchased by Frau and Fräulein Seifenschaum, for the beloved Herr, was choice in its binding, and had pockets in the cover, and a silver-gilt clasp. Moreover, the affectionate little wife and daughter caused the revered name of Zacharias Seifenschaum to be impressed in golden letters on the scarlet morocco integument of this *édition de luxe*. They meant to have a happy time; and, with German forethought, they provided something which might serve in after years as a fit and pleasing memento.

All my readers who have made the grand (Cook's) tour of the habitable world, and have seen therein "how few know their own good; or, knowing it, pursue," are of course acquainted with that famous hostelry, the Brazen Bootjack, in the delightfully rustic town and watering-place of Rauchenbad. To the Brazen Bootjack, Bædeker in hand, or in side-pocket of overcoat, went Counsellor Seifenschaum, his wife, and his pretty little daughter, Dorothy. Counsellor Seifenschaum, and no less, was the entry in the visitor's book at the Brazen Bootjack—Counsellor Seifenschaum and family. The list of fashionable arrivals, punctually printed in the local *Intelligenzblatt* contained the pleasing information that Counsellor Seifenschaum, Frau Seifenschaum, and Fräulein Seifenschaum had arrived in Rauchenbad from Trübenheim, and were staying at the Brazen Bootjack. The worthy hairdresser had long thought of giving up business, so far as his shop was concerned; and was now almost on the very point of doing so. To describe himself by the name of his trade went much against the grain of his dignity—that false dignity, in the indulgence of which Zacharias Seifenschaum was no whit weaker, perhaps, than thousands who account themselves men of some considerable strength of mind. Yet the laws of the Grand Duchy of Staubregensburg were imperative that every traveller should declare his degree or calling, for information of the active and intelligent police, a part of whose duty it was to keep a vigilant eye upon the hotel-lists of that well-governed country. Herr Seifens-

chaum had some slight acquaintance with the chief of the Rauchenbad police, to whom he went quietly with his little secret. So it came about that "Counsellor" was the description of our friend at the Brazen Bootjack, and "hairdresser" on the books of the police; and whatever was known in the bureau of the High Policeman, was of course known to the Grand Duke himself. Would you have thought that any complication could arise out of so harmless a deception as that which Herr Seifenschaum practised upon the society of Rauchenbad in general, and the Brazen Bootjack in particular? It seems hardly possible. But, ah! as the poet says—

Ah! what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practice to deceive!

For a shaver of clients to call himself a shaver of clients is right or is wrong, according to circumstances. If the shaving were merely the shaving of an unseemly growth of bristles on a human chin, for the consideration of two or three silbergroschen, it might well be deemed an arrogant pretence on the part of the shaver to represent himself as one who shaveth victims to the quick. If I take a gentleman deferentially by the nose, after having well belabored his lower jaw, whisk a keen razor across the stubble-field of his chin, ask him what he thinks about the Eastern Question, or the latest mystery out Penge way, and express my deep obligation to him as I take his threepence, and wish him good morning, these considerations can never entitle me to the proud boast that I have reduced him to beggary, deprived his wife of her jointure and her jewels, devoured his children's inheritance, and robbed their bread of its butter. No, a thousand times no! I am but a barber in a small, though snug way of business. It becomes me not to affect the airs of one who is fat with fees that have been drained from the life of hapless creatures, caught in the mighty toils of the law.

I don't think, I really do not think, Zacharias Seifenschaum was warranted in calling himself a counsellor, at the Brazen Bootjack. However, so he did, and if we are to go into the morality of the business, we may as well give up all idea of finishing the present history.

It has been mentioned that the prettily bound Bædeker had silken pockets inside the cover. Into these pockets counsellor Seifenschaum placed five hundred thalers in notes. I don't know what he wanted with such a heap of money. It was twice as much as he and his frugal women-folk could possibly need for their little holiday at Rauchenbad. I suppose he thought it wise to be well provided, in case of emergencies. But it was foolish, on the part of so usually sagacious a man to lay down his Bædeker, with all that wealth in it, on a seat under a linden-tree, in the public gardens, and to leave it there.

Consternation prevailed in the Seifenschaum family, but not for any great length of time. On their return to the Brazen Bootjack, after a call on the head of the Rauchenbad police, they were met by an elegant young man, who was staying at the same hostelry, and who had been observed to cast many looks of respectful admiration upon Miss Dorothy whenever they met, which was about fifty times a day. This young gentleman, a person of some social standing, inasmuch as he held the rank of Attaché, stepped forward as Herr Seifenschaum darkened with doleful visage, the porch of the hotel, and smilingly presented him with his lost Bædeker. As you have already been informed, the name of Zacharias Seifenschaum was stamped in golden characters on the morocco binding of the precious guide book.

The joy of Seifenschaum was quickly followed by the first pang of regret, caused by the thought of his deception. This well-born young man had evidently fallen head over ears in love with Dorothy. The poor girl was much too honest to deceive a suitor, and, for the matter of that, so was Seifenschaum, or his wife either. Still they had kept up the pretence so long and so glaringly, that it was difficult to get out of their false position, with anything like a good grace. Suppose the youthful diplomat should turn round upon them? They would then feel that they might have spared themselves the mortification, simply by taking high ground, and breaking off the intimacy of their own accord. It was a puzzling situation, but as Dorothy had not yet received a tender avowal from her attached attaché, there was still time to consider what course should be pursued when the declaration came.

It had not come before a fresh complication startled and puzzled the Seifenschaum intellect. As the four leading characters of this little drama were sitting at breakfast one morning—for the attaché had by this time carried matters so far, as to make a point of joining the family circle thus early on each succeeding day. The host of the Brazen Bootjack, with many humble apologies for troubling them with so strange a question, begged to ask whether either of the illustrious Herren could throw any light upon the circumstances which had led to the receipt of a letter from the neighbouring castle, addressed by His Serene Highness the Grand Duke to "The Hairdresser now staying at the Brazen Bootjack, in Rauchenbad."

Here was a good opportunity for worthy Zacharias Seifenschaum to relieve his oppressed mind of a secret that was becoming more and more terrible to bear. But his courage failed him at the critical moment. He would have endured the humiliation of making his disclosure to the attaché or to the landlord, for there was little doubt that the latter knew it already. But he shrank from taking both at once into his confidence. So, without much acting, he looked completely mystified and wonder-stricken, as he answered mine host with a distinct repudiation of acquaintance with any and all hairdressers whatsoever.

The landlord bowed and backed out. Herr Seifenschaum could not conceal his embarrassment; and he was so evidently ill at ease, that the well-bred attaché, plainly perceiving that his intended papa-in-law was troubled in spirit, politely withdrew. If he had stayed but another moment or two he would have heard the old gentleman's touching confession of tontorial guilt. But so sensitive was the amiable young gentleman, in his delicate consideration for another's feelings, that he could not bear to remain a spectator of Herr Seifenschaum's perturbation of mind. Indeed, if you had seen the almost awkward manner of his adieux, you might have thought that a sudden confusion had seized the Attaché rather than the Counsellor. So strong is the feeling of sympathy in generous youth.

"Papa," said Dorothy, "you may depend upon it, the Grand Duke has heard of your being in Rauchenbad, and has sent for you to cut his hair."

"No doubt of it," my love, chimed in Frau Seifenschaum, addressing her husband. "It is a hundred thousand pities you did not take the letter."

"I will take it now," said the repentant Seifenschaum; "it is not too late for me to claim it from our host, who doubtless is still engaged in the pursuit of inquiries."

Away went the excellent man in quest of the landlord; and great was his dismay when he heard that, not finding any claimant for the letter, this over hasty Teuton, belying the deliberate habits of his countrymen, had returned the document with a most humble and submissive apology to the Grand Duke, for not having been able to find a hairdresser at the Brazen Bootjack.

You may imagine,—no, you may not, for you can't, and nobody can—the consternation of Herr Seifenschaum. How long had the Grand Duke's messenger been gone? He (Seifenschaum) would catch him, or perish in the attempt. It does not take more than three-quarters of an hour to harness a pair of horses, and turnout a carriage, at any bustling stable-yard in Germany; but Seifenschaum would not wait even this little time; so he set off on foot for the Schloss; and he was in a mighty perspiration when he reached the side entrance of the grand Ducal residence, and announced himself as the hairdresser from the Brazen Bootjack.

but Seifenschaum would not wait even this little time; so he set off on foot for the Schloss; and he was in a mighty perspiration when he reached the side entrance of the grand Ducal residence, and announced himself as the hairdresser from the Brazen Bootjack.

"The hairdresser from the Bootjack is here already, and has nearly finished cutting, singeing, shampooing, brushing, curling, and macassar-oiling the hair of the Grand Duke," said a footman, eyeing Seifenschaum, as any tall footman with Grand Ducal powder on his head, and Grand Ducal blazonry on his buttons, might eye a suspicious character.

"Impossible," gasped Herr Seifenschaum, wiping his forehead. "There must be some mistake."

"No doubt about that," said the tall footman.

"But—but tell me," said the puzzled man; "what kind of looking fellow is the one upstairs, with his serene highness?"

"Didn't notice him much," said the footman. "A tolerable smart looking chap. Oh! here he comes."

And at that moment who should come down the back stairs, and along the servants' passage, but the Attaché.

"You here! Counsellor Seifenschaum," said the young man, turning very red.

"I here, yes!" cried the papa of pretty Dorothy, as he blushed in turn. There they stood facing one another, and stammering disjointed sentences of no particular meaning. The Counsellor said it was a very warm day. The Attaché accorded a ready and almost enthusiastic assent to this proposition. Beyond the statement of the fact and the confirmation of it, however, neither of them could go; till at last the Attaché said—

"Counsellor Seifenschaum, I have a painful confession to make. I have deceived you, sir; deceived your estimable spouse; deceived—" and here his voice for some seconds failed him. Then he went on again. "Moved by a foolish vanity I inscribed my name in the hotel book with a title to which I have no claim. I called myself 'Attaché,' thinking to be treated with the greater consideration by the proprietor of the Brazen Bootjack. I am, in truth, 'attaché,' to a business—a hairdresser."

"Of what?" exclaimed Herr Seifenschaum.

"Yes, most learned and dignified Counsellor, I am a hairdresser, not my trade, that is to say, but my father's. My father was only a hairdresser, a barber, nay, a barber's clation has promised to buy for me a thriving business. I have been informed, is now in the market, and the present owner has made his fortune and retired."

"What is his name?" asked Seife-

"I do not know his name, most certainly," said the young man, but his shop stands in the best quarter of the town, opposite the railway station and the Grand Hotel."

"And that shop shall be yours," said Seifenschaum. "Your relation's money, much, shall go into one of the best concerns in all Staubregensburg, and help you to make it a finer property than it is. I don't want the money. Don't call me Counsellor. I'm no more a Counsellor than you're an Attaché, or than my wife is Pope of Rome. In that shop, she and I, bless her, have lived these twenty years, and have struggled against hard times, and made hay in the sunshine, and here we are comfortably provided for, with nothing to think of but the happiness of our only child."

So the old hairdresser and the young hairdresser went back arm-in-arm to the Brazen Bootjack, where all was very soon happiness and joy. And in the evening, a bright full moon having sailed up into the unruflled bosom of the heavens, Herr Seifenschaum and his wife sat again on the seat under the linden tree, the seat on which the Bædeker, now a treasured book for generations to come, had been lost and found, and the band played softly while the lovers walked to and fro in the tender moonlight.

That's all.

QUITE AT HIS MERCY

By WILLIAM H. GARRETT.

BETWEEN the two men with whom this story is almost exclusively concerned there had long been a clearly marked difference of opinion on nearly every vital question which they had ever discussed together—including even that which involves the moral distinction between justifiable homicide and downright murder. had never evinced any disposition to avoid the social contact, and when they met, which had been rather late, they chatted together pleasantly enough on the most trivial subjects, and seemed content to maintain a studied reticence on the question which was inadvertently raised upon which they were pretty certain to be totally at variance. In but follow the example of that large and distinguished class of people known by the name of trimmers. men was called Otto Inkleman. His father was a noted sausage maker in the Prussian town of Hartz, and had been employed as a boy in helping his father in the paternal skill at a certain pork-shop university which forms the chief feature of the Saale. Otto's education had been so much neglected as might be inferred from his appearance. At four o'clock

his parents to release him from his school, he was obliged by them to spend the greater part of the time under the supervision of a zealous teacher whom young Otto had recently called the Stachelschwein.

At the age of eighteen Otto Inkleman, so distasteful to him forsook his father's roof, and became a strolling player that he encountered in a small town miles from the Hartz Mountains. These enterprising proved equally ready to present scenes from Schiller and Kotzebue, or to exhibit their suppleness and muscular power in the performance of those gymnastic feats which are usually associated with the sawdust of the country circus.

Even as a child, Otto had evinced a singular liking for walking on the tops of gates, and for running along the summit of a very high wall which formed one side of his father's garden. As time went on, this passion for climbing to dangerous heights became so strong as to lead him on one occasion to accompany a daring workman in his ascent to repair the weather-cock of a neighbouring church. It was not at all surprising, then, that the youth should accept with avidity an offer made by one of the itinerant company to teach him the art of walking upon the tight-rope. So assiduously and fearlessly, indeed, did Otto Inkleman pursue his new vocation that five years had hardly elapsed ere his astounding nerve and skill had secured for him engagements in every capital in Europe. It was after a second very lucrative tour of this kind that he made the acquaintance, at Lyons, of Walter Knight, the other individual referred to by me at the outset. The men again met at Paris soon after, whither Otto had gone to fulfil a somewhat lengthy engagement; and it was towards the close of his stay in that city that he became the husband of his early love, Gretchen, a fair-haired German girl with a complexion in which ivory-white and the pink of the blush-rose were pleasingly blended.

Walter Knight, the descendant of a family which had figured

prominently during the Wars of the Roses, was at this time engaged as an assistant scene-painter at a small theatre which used to stand in a narrow street not far from the Luxembourg. He saw Otto Inkleman frequently at a neighbouring café, to which the ropewalker daily went to drink his glass of *vermouth* about half an hour before the time—midday to the moment—when he sat down to his daintily arranged *déjeuner*; from which he made it a rule never to rise till the large gilded clock which faced him had marked the lapse of an hour and a half. To this meal, as well as to dinner, Otto several times invited the young painter, for the former was glad to have someone near him, besides his wife, who could speak to him in his native language, the only one in which he was able to express himself with clearness. Otto, as became his birth, had a strong dislike to anyone who attached the slightest importance to patrician lineage, and this was one of the subjects which the two friends mutually agreed to avoid. But Gretchen was as yet unconscious of this feeling on the part of her husband, and she would sometimes, as she knew hardly anything of the English and their history, encourage Walter Knight to speak of the country in which he was born, and he was thus insensibly led on one occasion to touch briefly upon the part that his family, in times long since gone by, had played on more than one well-fought field. The sneer, however, which this recital brought to the thin pale lips of Otto Inkleman soon reminded Walter Knight that the subject which he had introduced was a distasteful one to his host.

Upon a certain afternoon, when the young scene-painter had been maintaining a lively conversation with Gretchen, the light blue eyes of Otto Inkleman were suddenly raised from the plate in which he had been rather gloomily contemplating for some minutes his untasted strawberries, and he asked abruptly: “Do you find scene-painting a profitable occupation?”

Walter Knight turned from Gretchen to the speaker, and looked at him with a studied expression of surprise on his face, not unmixed, however, with a shade of annoyance. Unless a man is remarkably successful in the career he has chosen, he rarely likes to be questioned as to the income yielded by his efforts. Some such feeling as this prompted the Englishman to reply, after a forced laugh, “Why do you ask that, Inkleman; are you dissatisfied with the pecuniary results of following your own calling, and do you wish to begin the study of my profession, at the close of your Paris engagement?”

“No,” answered the other, quietly, “my performance on the high rope is now bringing me in 1,000 francs each time I appear, and I don’t think there is any other way open to me of getting so large an income with so little risk.”

“So little risk!” echoed Walter Knight, raising his eyebrows. “Oh, yes; now I catch the spirit of your grim humour. There is merely the risk of falling from a height considerably greater than that of this house, and in such a way meeting with certain death.”

“I was alluding to the very remote chance I ever have of losing a single thaler of what I once earn. It would not be so were I to invest my savings in business, you know,” explained the German, somewhat coldly.

“But, Otto, we have enough, oh, surely enough, without your continuing to endanger your life,” pleaded Gretchen, with a slight shiver, and an anxious glance at their guest.

“When first we spoke of marriage, Gretchen, you told me that it was my courage, my daring, made you love me; and now you speak of the performances which have made me famous, and yielded us plenty of money, with shuddering dislike,” said Otto, in a cold hard voice which brought a startled expression into her deep blue eyes.

“Yes, at first, dear Otto; but now that I am your wife I could wish that you were anything rather than what you are,” she answered earnestly.

“That is a pity,” he said sneeringly, “for you will have to be content with my way of life, for the next few years, anyhow. I like it. To me there is no risk in it, for I can walk upon a rope at any height with just as much safety as I can step across the floor of this room. But I have a proposal to make to you my friend,” he added, turning to Walter Knight, “and one which I think, may be made very advantageous to you. I have been getting 500 francs extra a night during the past week for this new exploit of mine with the wheelbarrow, but the man I wheel over the rope has fallen suddenly ill, so I was told this morning; and it would take me a considerable time to discover anyone with nerve enough to take his place. Now, until the person I speak of recovers—I went up with him to the weathercock of a church when I was a boy—I am willing to divide the extra sum which I am to get, with you, if you will agree to my wheeling you across the rope in the barrow, during the performances of the next twenty days. You would have nothing to fear in my hands.”

“Oh no; do not consent to that, Herr Knight,” said Gretchen quickly. “You would turn giddy and—and I don’t at all approve of Otto’s new feat, for you might—” She stopped in some trepidation on observing the strange look of eager expectancy which was visible in her husband’s face.

“Well, go on. He might what?” asked Otto Inkleman in a low steady voice.

“Why, if I turned giddy, I should cause the loss of your life as well as my own. That is what your wife means, I presume,” broke in Walter Knight. “But I don’t think that would be at all likely, if I had determination enough to look upwards constantly.”

“You have active courage enough, I am certain,” said the ropewalker, after a few moments silence, during which he fixed his eyes searchingly on the face of his friend. “But have you passive courage? Can you resign yourself with implicit confidence into my hands, and regard yourself as a being who has no right to have any opinion whatever about the possibility of falling, save that which I may choose to convey to you. For our undertaking you must regard yourself as a mere helpless mass, without the power of voluntary movement, and dependent upon me in every respect. Make up your mind to be all this, and I can answer for it, that you will be as safe as—as you are at the present moment.”

“I have no doubt that I could shut my eyes as a precautionary measure, and then—”

“Yes, you might shut them at the starting point; but I don’t think you could keep them shut,” interrupted Otto Inkleman.

“I have never felt any nervousness, even when standing at the edge of a precipice,” remarked the painter.

“Then I am quite willing to wheel you across the rope and back. But remember,” said Otto slowly and clearly, “that if you become, contrary to my expectation, frightened, and try to balance yourself, by leaning either to one side or the other, I shall be obliged, for my own sake, to drop the handles of the wheelbarrow and abandon you to your fate.”

“Oh, Otto, that would be too horrible!” exclaimed Gretchen, covering her eyes with her hands, as if to shut out some shocking vision.

“Would it, my little wife?” said the rope walker, dryly, as he rose and took a box of cigarettes from a side table—he did not smoke himself—and offered them to his guest. Gretchen got up from her chair also at this hint, and left the two men alone.

“It is agreed, then, that you are to trust yourself to me this evening?” interrogated Otto, after a short silence.

“Yes,” replied Walter Knight, who had been looking abstractedly at the time-piece, “I am willing to take the risk upon the terms of remuneration you have mentioned. The fact is, I have

pressing need of 2,000 francs, and must have them ere the close of next week.”

“Very well; then we must have a rehearsal this afternoon with a net slung a few yards below you; but, of course, you understand that there will be no net when we appear before the public to-night,” said Otto.

“Perfectly. I take the risk in consideration of the gain,” answered the other.

They parted a few minutes later, with more cordial expressions of good feeling on the part of Otto than the painter had ever before received from his friend.

Otto soon after went out and walked rapidly towards the huge building where he now nightly performed. He overtook Walter Knight who had stopped to speak to one of the actors at the theatre, but when Otto had turned into another street and nearly reached the bottom of it he paused, and retraced his steps; he had forgotten to bring with him a pair of velvet shoes which he wore during his dangerous performance. When within a few yards of his own door, he saw the figure of a man upon the steps in the act of pulling the bell. It was that of Walter Knight. The German touched him on the shoulder and said in a thin, strained voice, “returned again so soon, my dear friend!—Why, how did you know that I should turn back for my shoes?”

“I didn’t know it,” replied Walter simply.

“I believe you,” said Otto, quickly suppressing the commencement of a bitter laugh into which he had been betrayed, and changing it to a cough.

“I came back for my umbrella, which I left here,” explained the painter.

“I rather think you hadn’t one; we shall see.”

They entered the house, but their search for the missing article was in vain.

“Ah, well,” said Walter, as they once more reached the street, “I must have left it on one of the tables of the café.”

Otto smiled, and then he asked with something of eagerness in his manner, “You will not fail me at the last moment to-night? It would not do to disappoint a large audience in carnival time, you know. That kind of thing is apt to make one unpopular, and might cause a row. You must come, now.”

Walter laughed as he said, “I am too much in want of the money to miss the chance of earning such a sum nightly.”

Again they parted, to meet in an hour’s time for the rehearsal. No sooner had Otto passed through the preliminary ordeal than he hastened to his lodgings and wrote a lengthy letter to his sister at Pimlico. An excerpt from this epistle will sufficiently indicate the nature of its contents:

So with this money I can pay off the liability that poor Charles has contracted, and prevent the arrest that he dreads so much. With the balance I shall return next month to London, and marry my faithful Sally. But do not say a word about all this to her. I will do that myself when the proper time comes.

Having placed a postage stamp upon this letter, he put it into the breast pocket of his coat, intending to drop his missive into a *boîte aux lettres* which was let into the wall of a house close to his own residence. Not long after, he descended to the hall door and had just opened it when he saw Gretchen standing without. She was pale, and her eyelids had that redness which tells of many tears. It seemed to Walter that she had been waiting irresolutely at the door.

“Herr Knight,” she said in a hurried voice, speaking as she always did to him in her native language, “I have come to advise you, to implore you, not to trust yourself on that fearful rope. I cannot tell you all my reasons for dreading some fatal result. But believe me when I say that your life—”

“There is not the slightest risk if he does what is right,” said a voice.

She turned with a half suppressed scream, and saw that her husband was almost at her side. He had crossed over unperceived from an archway nearly opposite, where he had been hidden from view while his wife had been waiting.

“Come, Gretchen,” Otto went on in a cheerful well modulated voice, “as a reward for your continued anxiety about my good friend’s safety we shall insist on your witnessing our performance yourself this evening. Let us go home now, my little wife, it is almost time that I should prepare for the rope. I shall expect to see you,” he added, as he nodded to Walter Knight, “in an hour’s time.” The husband of Gretchen then led her away by clasping one of her arms just above the elbow.

Walter Knight thought it somewhat strange that she should exhibit so much nervousness respecting the risk he was about to run, when her husband was nightly in the habit of encountering a peril equally great. But the young painter soon came to the conclusion that the course she had just taken had been prompted by some suddenly awakened fear that her husband’s safety would be placed in unusual jeopardy by having a new occupant of the wheelbarrow.

Absorbed by these thoughts he forgot to post his letter and at length turned into the café where he had met Inkleman that morning. Here he soon found that the missing umbrella had been taken charge of by the *dame de comptoir* who had received it from one of the waiters.

From this place he passed along some of the *boulevards*, now crowded, as they always are at Christmas time, by toy-stalls. He was rejoined by Otto Inkleman at the entrance to their destination.

“Well, are you still brave enough to cross the high rope with me?” asked the Prussian gaily. “But I need hardly ask, for I don’t think you would be here if you had changed your mind.”

“It is not bravery; I suspect that I am not particularly endowed with that virtue. Some men who cannot put their heads through a window on the third floor may yet be valiant enough to win a sword of honour.”

Otto did not reply; but contented himself with saying “My Gretchen refuses to be present during the performance;” and then he led the way to the dressing room.

The vast building, with its tier upon tier of boxes, was crowded when Otto made his appearance. He was watched with breathless interest as he placed Walter Knight in the barrow, and ran the grooved wheel on to the chalked rope which was stretched from one side of the house to the other, and at a height but little below that of the lofty ceiling. When the rope walker had accomplished half the distance across, he stopped as was his custom, and the applause became general and continuous. In spite of the noise in the house Walter Knight soon became conscious that Otto was speaking to him.

“You are able to hear me, are you not, Walter Knight?” said Otto at length.

“Oh yes; but I fear that my nerves are not quite strong enough to admit of turning my head round to look at you, even if that were not contrary to orders.”

“Listen, but do not move: the slightest movement on your part would be the signal for your death,” was uttered by Otto in a tone almost fierce.

“Then I will take particular care not to wink even,” answered Walter firmly.

“Now, attend. Your secret is known to me,” said the ropewalker.

“What secret?” asked the other in a tone of wonder.

“The secret of your love.”

“That can have no interest for you, Inkleman,” rejoined Walter, who now began to experience an undefined dread.

“You think that I don’t love my wife sufficiently for that, do you?” demanded Otto, in a deep voice, that had something tragic in its notes. “You shall soon be undeceived then.”

“I think nothing of the kind,” replied Walter quickly.

“Immortal! You shall die all the same within the next few minutes.”

“Are you mad?” cried Walter, on whose forehead a profuse perspiration had suddenly broken out.

“Yes, I think I am,” said Otto bitterly, “but that is not to the purpose. You have heard me argue long ago that a man is justified, both in the sight of God and of man, in killing the seducer of his wife. To be brief, you are the lover of my wife, and she has been false to me. Your return to my house to-day, when you unexpectedly encountered me, her anxiety for your safety, these and fifty other things that I have noticed—all prove your guilt.”

“What frenzy is this which has seized you?”

“Remember that you are completely at my mercy and make a clean breast of it, before you lie a mass of broken bones on those empty iron chairs far beneath us. It will be regarded as a pure accident by the audience, and I shall be avenged. I have suspected you both for some time past, but not till to-day did I feel quite certain of my dishonour. As I look down upon you sitting there, I can almost see the letter which I am sure she gave you at your door. It was peeping from the breast pocket of your coat, as I was putting you into the barrow. Now, tell me how long this has been going on, or I will drop the handles I hold, and send you headlong below.” This last sentence was hissed through Otto’s clenched teeth.

“Inkleman,” said the painter in that thick broken voice, which proceeds from a throat parched by feverish emotion, “you are the victim of a delusion, the offspring of a wildly jealous nature. Your wife, even if I had seen her when she was Fraulein Schultz would never have made any impression on my heart. I am, in fact, engaged to a woman whom I love dearer than all the world beside, and this very letter you speak of, which I forgot to post on my way hither, would prove what I say, if you could see it.”

“Then let me see it,” said Otto, doubtfully.

“I cannot; it would be death, you know, were I to move,” replied Walter Knight.

“All false; a mere trick to gain time.”

“Wheel me to the other side, and then I solemnly promise to show you the letter. As to the umbrella, ask at the café if I did not find it there an hour ago.”

The applause had gradually subsided, but the strains of a large military band beneath, still rendered their voices audible to none but themselves.

“No, you would then escape me; but stop, I can balance you with one hand, resting a leg of the barrow on the rope. With the other hand I can take the letter from you, and read sufficient of it for my purpose, if you can hand it to me steadily over your left shoulder. But beware of too sudden a movement, either to one side or the other, if you would not lose your life sooner than I intend.”

The letter was handed open to Otto Inkleman, amid a fresh outburst of applause from the audience, who supposed that this new and difficult feat had been duly practised for their delectation.

“Now, you can murder me,” said Walter Knight, “if you choose; but my last words will be, I am quite innocent of the charge you have made against me.”

“I am satisfied that you at least are not to blame. Perhaps I have been altogether mistaken,” said Otto Inkleman, doubtfully; and then he wheeled his burden in safety to the other side of the house.

But Walter did not again trust his life to the Prussian ropewalker, and the painter had therefore to wait for two years longer ere he wedded the woman of his choice.

ON THE WISCONSIN.

BY G. E. WRIGHT.

THEM pine-trees is a singing so strange-ways over yon.

Dunno! And yit I’ve hearn ‘em agoin sixty year,
And I’ve rafted on the rivyer from Squash to Hubbleton;
But to-day I somehow ruther am afeelin’ kinder queer.

I’ve hearn ‘em in the midnight when all was solim-like,
When all the sky was quyit, and all the yair was saft,
And ‘twas like a band of moosic, as nigh as you could strike,
As you listened from the windy of the cabin of the raft.

I ain’t no hand for talkin’, but I guess I know what’s what.
Sometimes I hanker less-like, and sometimes I hanker more;
But I’ve tuk an ear for moosic, yes I hev, an awful lot,
And I go to Squash whenever they’s a dance down to the Store.

I ain’t so high and mighty as to go inside the room,
Wher the dancin’ and the fiddlin’ is agoin’ on so fast,
And the wimmen-folks, all gorjus in calicore and ploom,
Make a picter that’s too nice and bootiful to last.

But I stow myself outside-like, and listen on the stairs,
While the moosic from above comes afloatin’ saftly down.
Dunno! But somehow ruther, afore I’m jest awares,
I fergit I’m in Jim Higgins’ store, I fergit I’m in the town.

I seem to slide off all to onct, until I’m far away,
I’m up the rivyer, in the woods, jest in the same old lines;
I’m young agin, and cheerful, and I work from day to day
With Dad and Charlie, and I hear the moosic of the pines.

It’s pleasant-like at first, but it changes very soan,
Fer Dad’s brung home one Chrississ day killed by a fallin tree;
And then it gits more sorryful, and I am lufft alone,
Fer Charlie he gits up and dies, shot in a jamboree.

I ain’t no hand fer talkin’, but it are tough, I gosh!
To be left a little feller like me without a Dad;
But I’ve rafted on the rivyer from Hubbleton to Squash
Fer fifty year, and some of ‘em was good and some was bad.

You pity me? Waal, Mister, this here is lots of fun.
Ha! ha! axcoose my lassin; but I’ve rafted fifty year,
And I know the old Wisconsin from Squash to Hubbleton,—
But when I hear them pine-trees I do feel kinder queer.

Chicago, Oct. 15.



HIS BATTLES O'ER AGAIN.—DRAWN BY E. H. ANDREWS.



CHRISTMAS IN AMERICA—POT-HUNTERS—"KNOCK DE BOFF OB DEM!"—DRAWN BY A. B. FROST.



THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY—TUNING UP.—DRAWN BY H. PETHERICK.

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THE EMPEROR OTTO I. BEFORE THE BODY OF HIS BROTHER



misery—it might be to shame. Oh, rather than that let it be death. In time, doubtless, he might come to think, with resignation, of her lying at rest in some quiet churchyard. But it was madness to think of her disgraced and dishonoured; that fair flower, which he had deemed almost too lovely for earth, trampled in the gutter, flung aside to wither, like the vilest weed. He went in at the open gate, along the grass grown walk to the low door where he had been used to enter. He rang a bell that sounded dismally, as in an empty house.

The old housekeeper opened the door. She curtsied and smiled, and seemed pleased to see him. It struck him all at once that he might learn more from her than from the master of the house. She was Mr. Leeworthy's junior by a good many years. Her memory would be clearer, and he could question her more freely.

"I have come to see your old master, Mrs. Dill, but I should like to have a few minutes talk with you first. I've only just come home from sea, and I've heard something that has taken all the joy out of my return."

"I think I know what you mean, Sir. You've heard about Miss Helen. She was always a favourite with you, wasn't she? You were like a playfellow with her, though you were so much older. She loved you like a brother."

"And I loved her as I never have loved and never shall love any other woman," answered the Captain. "I tell you my secret, Mrs. Dill, because I want you to speak freely. I want you to help me to find her."

"Find her," sighed the housekeeper. "Oh, Sir, who can hope for that, after five long years, and after Mr. Thomas Leeworthy doing all that could be done, and he a public man too, and so clever. Who could do more than he could?"

"Love, my good soul, true love, which is as strong as faith, and can move mountains. Mr. Thomas Leeworthy may have been a very affectionate uncle, but he never loved his niece as I love—yes, as I love her. Living or dead—lost or found—she is to me the dearest thing upon earth. And now tell me every circumstance of her disappearance—every suspicion—every conjecture."

Captain Bywater had followed the housekeeper into a little room off the hall, a chilly looking disused parlour, where the very furniture had a phantasmal look, like a dream of the past.

"Lord bless your heart, Sir, there is so little to tell. We went to her room one morning and found her gone—the bed had not been slept in—she must have gone over night."

"Did she go to her room that night, at the usual hour? You are early people here, I know."

"Well, Sir, that's a thing that has never been quite clear to my mind. Miss Helen used to be fond of walking out alone those fine summer evenings, while her grand-papa and Mr. Thomas sat over their port. Both gentlemen are fond of a good bottle of port, you know, Sir. They dined at five, and they used to sit a long time, as late as nine o'clock sometimes—and then the old gentleman would go to bed, and Mr. Thomas would smoke his pipe on the lawn, all by himself, or with Mr. Elphinstone, his secretary, as it might happen. And Miss Helen always to go back to the dining room after she came in from her walk. She'd go straight up to her room sometimes, and sit and read there before she went to bed. Now on the night before we lost her it happened that neither I nor the maid saw her go upstairs to her room. It was a lovely evening. I remember it particularly, because it was such a red sunset."

Captain Bywater shivered. It was an idle thought to come into his mind at such a moment, but there flashed upon him that picture in the theatre last night. The body hidden among the rushes. The whole scene steeped in red light, like blood.

"No, Sir, nobody saw her come in doors or go upstairs to her room that night, and if I was put upon my oath I wouldn't say that she ever came back to the house after she left the two gentlemen sitting at their wine."

"Where was this Mr. Elphinstone, the secretary, that night?"

"At his work in the study, copying and compiling for Mr. Thomas Leeworthy's book, so far as I know, Sir."

"So far as you know; that means that he may just as easily have been any where else."

"I could take my oath as to where he was from nine to ten," said the house-keeper, somewhat offended.

"How is that?"

"Because I saw him from my sitting room window walking up and down the lawn with Mr. Thomas Leeworthy. It was moonlight, a lovely night after a lovely evening, and the two gentlemen were walking up and down talking for an hour. The clock struck ten as they came in to go to bed."

"Mr. Elphinstone slept in the house that night?"

"Yes, Sir, I'm certain of that. If you've got the notion that Mr. Elphinstone had any hand in Miss Helen's running away you're quite mistaken. If there was a lover at the bottom of it, as some folks say, it must have been some other lover. I'll take my oath it wasn't Mr. Elphinstone."

"Why are you so certain?"

"Because she hated him."

"How do you know that?"

"I could see it in all her ways. Perhaps hatred is too harsh a word to use about any one so gentle as Miss Helen. She could hardly have hated anyone if she had tried ever so. But I've seen her shrink from him, and avoid him in a way that was almost cruel. I've seen him stung by it, too, though he was a proud young man, that seldom let any one see what he felt. As to anything like a love affair between those two, it isn't possible."

"Who then could have lured her away? Was anyone else ever suspected?"

"Lord, no, Sir. Mr. Elphinstone was the only young man that ever crossed this threshold, except Mr. Chipping, the doctor, with a wife and five children and a wart on his nose."

"How did Elphinstone behave when Miss Leeworthy's disappearance was discovered?" asked Captain Bywater, still harping on the secretary.

"He was the only one of us that seemed to keep his senses. He was as calm and quiet as could be, ready to make himself useful in any way. He rode over to the market town before twelve o'clock, to set the constables at work. He was riding about all over the country for the next fortnight. If Miss Helen had been his sister, he couldn't have worked harder, or have seemed more anxious; which was very good of him, considering that poor Miss Helen had never taken kindly to him."

"Was there nothing discovered, not a trace of her?"

"No, sir, nothing was ever found; nothing was ever heard. People had their fancies: some said gipsies; some said Gretna Green. But a sweet, innocent young lady of seventeen can't go off to Gretna Green by herself, can she, sir? Some talked about the river, but the poor dear wouldn't have come to harm that way unless she'd thrown herself in, and why should she do that? God bless her, there wasn't a happier young lady in the county. Ah, sir, if you could have heard her talk of you. She loved you truly. When we had stormy weather she used to come to my room looking so unhappy, and say, 'Oh! Mrs. Dill, mustn't it be dreadful for those at sea. I shan't sleep to-night for thinking of shipwrecks.' And I know she has spent many a wakeful night for your sake, sir, thinking of your danger and praying for you."

"And I have thought of her in storm and in calm," said the captain. "Have you told me everything, Mrs. Dill,—everything?"

"Yes, sir; there isn't a word more to be said. Five long years

have come and gone, and we have heard nothing about her. We've left off hoping. The old gentleman is getting a little weak in his head. You won't get much out of him."

"Do you know what became of this Elphinstone? Is he still with Mr. Leeworthy?"

"No, sir. He stayed till the end of the year, and then Mr. Leeworthy's book was finished, and Mr. Elphinstone left him. Mr. Thomas had only hired him to help with the book. He was a very learned young man, I believe. I heard say that he went abroad after he left Mr. Thomas."

Captain Bywater went to the cedar parlour to pay a duty visit to old Squire Leeworthy. He found the owner of the grange sitting by a fire, for the fresh May breezes were sharp enough to find out the weak points in his ancient anatomy. He wore a black velvet skull cap on the top of his silver locks, and had an ivory handled cane at his side, with which to rap the floor when he wanted attendance. He was the shrunken ruin of a man who had once been handsome, commanding, and aristocratic.

"Fine weather, Sir? What do you mean by talking about fine weather, when the wind's in the east?"

"I haven't looked at the weathercock, Squire."

"Weathercock be hanged, Sir; when you're half as old as I am you'll want no weathercock to tell you where the wind is. You'll be your own weathercock. The east wind finds out every joint in my body. I can feel it in my knees, in my elbows, in my wrists even. The lubricating oil is exhausted, Sir. I'm dried up and shrivelled, and there's nothing left in me to resist the cold. Let me see, you're Charles Bywater, the lad that went to sea."

"Yes, Sir, I am Charles."

"Didn't I tell you so," cried the old man testily. "You're Charley, and you would go to sea. They couldn't keep you at home. Your uncle was a soldier, captain in the 49th Foot. Yes, and he was killed at Corunna. Where did I tell you he was killed? Hah! at Corunna. Yes. He was killed at Corunna, you know."

The Captain tried to look grateful for this information.

"Your mother was an uncommonly pretty woman—a little fair woman. I remember her well. She was a Vernon, and had money. Yes, she had money. I remember the bells being rung when your father brought her home. Yes, foolish thing that bell-ringing. The ringers always want money and beer—lots of beer—your father gave them beer, I daresay. I remember your father, too, a fine made man, broad shouldered, straight as an arrow. You'll never be so good looking as your father. Young men never are. The race is degenerating, Sir. The human species will be hideous in a generation or two, and every way inferior. I'm glad I shan't be here to see 'em."

"I have heard the sad news about your granddaughter, Sir," said Captain Bywater, gravely.

It pained him to hear the old man twaddling on without a thought of the lost one.

"Yes, very sad. Naughty girl. She's given us a great deal of anxiety. If it hadn't been for that estimable young man—El—El—Elphindian—"

"Elphinstone!"

"Yes, Elphinstone. I never could remember names. If it hadn't been for Elphindian we shouldn't have known what to do. But he was indefatigable—made every inquiry—searched in every direction."

"And found no trace of her."

"No, that was unfortunate. And now, let me see, it must be nearly a year since she went."

"It is five years, Sir."

"Five years, bless my soul. How short the years are, when we are going down-hill to our graves."

After this Captain Bywater could not endure any more of the old man's society. He took a civil leave of him and went out to explore familiar scenes. Great heaven, with what a heavy heart! Far away amidst tropical seas, under the southern cross, he had pictured to himself the joy of this return, fancied the delight of revisiting each favourite spot, with Helen by his side. He had come back, and all was gloom.

He bent his steps towards a gate that opened out of the Grange garden into a footpath that led through some meadows, park-like meadows, with good old trees overshadowing the grass and giving beauty to the landscape. This meadow path led to the banks of a narrow winding river. The footpath and the river-bank had both been favourite walks of Helen's. How often had Charles Bywater met her there; how often had he walked with her beside the silvery unpolluted stream.

The sun was sinking as he came through the last meadow to the river side. The light was crimson behind the long line of rush, and mallow, and wild entanglement of weeds that edged the stream.

Again there flashed back upon his mind that scene in the theatre last night—the red light behind the reeds—revenge and murder.

How lonely the scene was in that fading light. He lingered there, pacing slowly along the narrow path, till the last low streak of crimson melted into gray, and in all that time he had not met a creature, or seen a human figure in the distance, or heard any voice more human than the hoot of a far off owl, making its melancholy moan to the swift coming night. What deed of darkness might not be done in a spot like this, unsuspected, buried in impenetrable night.

Charles Bywater left that river path with a feeling of indescribable melancholy. He could not dissociate the scene with the mystery of Helen Leeworthy's fate. It had been her favourite walk. She had come here perhaps on that last night, and some ruffian, some loathsome brute in human shape, with a wild beast's ferocity and a man's cunning, had met her in the September sunset, alone, helpless, remote from the aid of man. He fancied her in the clutches of such a wretch, like some sweet struggling bird in the talons of a hawk. Her poor little purse, with its slender stock of money, her girlish trinkets would be enough to tempt such a brute to murder. A knife drawn quickly across the fair round throat, one faint gurgling cry, and then the splash of a body flung to the river rats, and all foul things that dwell in the nooks and crannies of the reedy bank.

"Yes, I believe she was murdered," thought Captain Bywater. "It was not in that gentle spirit to be reckless of the feelings of others. If it were possible that she could leave her home in an unmaidenly fashion, it is not possible that she could leave her poor old grandfather to grieve in ignorance of her fate. She was always thoughtful of others."

The impression was so strong upon him to night at this spot, that it was almost as if he had seen the deed done. The picture was as vivid to his mental vision as that other picture which he had seen last night on the stage at Drury Lane.

"What comes of Dorrell's theory, that every murder is discovered," he asked himself bitterly. "Here is some low village ruffian who has cunning enough to keep the secret of his crime. He swoops like a hawk upon his victim, and flies off like a hawk to unknown skies. A wretch, perhaps, who could not write his name, and yet had cleverness enough to cheat the gallows."

He walked slowly back to the village green, and the inn where his supper was waiting for him.

"I would give a good deal to see the secretary," he thought. "His superior intelligence might assist me. Yet if he could do nothing to unravel the mystery, while it was still fresh in men's minds, is it likely he could throw any light upon it now?"

The landlord of the Sun waited on Captain Bywater while he eat his simple supper, a meal to which he did scanty justice. He had eaten nothing since noon, yet the tender young chicken and the home cured ham were as tasteless as dust and ashes.

"You're looking very ill, Sir," said the host. "I'm afraid it's been a shock to you hearing about poor Miss Leeworthy."

"It has, Jarvis. I had known her from a child, remember."

"All the village had known her from a child," said Mr. Jarvis.

"I think it seemed to all of us as if we'd lost one of our own."

"You told me you would have gone out of your way to avoid meeting Mr. Elphinstone, the secretary," said the Captain, pushing away his plate, and throwing himself back in his chair. "Why was that? Was there anything repulsive about the man?"

"Well, no, Sir, I can't take upon myself to say he was repulsive. He looked the gentleman, he was a neat dresser, he had a good foot and ankle, carried himself well, and was civil spoken enough whenever he condescended to open his lips to any of us villagers, which wasn't often. But there was something inside me that turned against him, somehow, just as one man's stomach will turn against a dish that another man relishes. There was something in his dark eye that gave me a chilly feeling when he looked at me."

"Should you call him a handsome man?"

"Far from it, Sir. He was small and insignificant. You could have passed him by in a crowd without taking notice of him if you hadn't happened to meet his eye. That would have fixed you."

"There was something serpent-like in it, perhaps."

"Yes, Sir—cold, and still, and stealthy, and yet piercing."

"Did he bear a good character while he was with you?"

"I never heard anyone speak against him, but he was no favourite. He was one of those well-behaved young men that nobody likes."

This was all that Captain Bywater could hear about Mr. Thomas Leeworthy's secretary. He bade good bye to Clerevale next morning, and the coach carried him back to London. The scenes of his boyhood had become hateful to him. Everything was darkened by the shadow of his irreparable loss.

CHAPTER III.

DRIVEN BY THE FURIES.

CHARLES BYWATER found himself in London with a long spell of idleness before him, very few friends or even acquaintance, a well filled purse and a broken heart. The pleasures of the town could offer him no distraction, the vices of the town could not tempt him. His grief was as honest as it was deep. The dream of his life was ended. He had nothing to look forward to beyond his profession—nothing to hope for but the distinction of an honourable career, and perchance to die in a cock-pit, like Nelson, while his sailors were fighting over his head.

He ordered a suit of black, and put crape on his hat, having no doubt that the woman he loved was dead.

A week after his return he went to see Phillimore Dorrell, who was shocked at seeing the change in his friend.

"Why, man alive, what have you been doing to yourself?" he exclaimed. "You look as if you had died and come to life again."

"That may well be," answered Captain Bywater, "for the best part of me is dead."

And then he told Dorrell his story, and asked his advice.

"You know more of the dark secrets of this wicked world than anyone else," he said, in conclusion, "you may help me to unravel the mystery."

"My dear Bywater, my experience in matters of this kind has led me to take a very commonplace view of such cases. I have found that when a young lady vanishes she generally knows very well where she is going. I do not believe in mysterious disappearances, or undiscovered murders."

"You did not know Helen Leeworthy. She was little more than a child in years, and quite a child in innocence, utterly incapable of double dealing. It is my firm belief that she was waylaid and murdered within half a mile of her home."

"And all this happened five years ago. I'm afraid, my dear Bywater, if the poor young lady did come to an untimely end at the hand of some ruffian, this will be one of those exceptional murders which go to prove my rule, that the generality of such crimes are found out. This is a case which would interest Elyard, as a probable murder that has not come to light. He was here a few nights ago discussing his favourite thesis."

"What a ghoulish temper the man must have to dwell upon such a revolting subject."

"Well, I grant that his conversation savours somewhat of the charnel house. I fancy that the hit he has made in that horrible tragedy, *The Venetian Husband*, has given his mind a twist in that direction. He sups full of horrors. But the man is interesting, and he exercises a powerful fascination over me. Not altogether a pleasant influence I admit. There is something snaky in his eye that chills me when I am most familiar with him. But he is no lump of common clay. He is a being of light and fire."

"So is Lucifer," said Captain Bywater, "but I shouldn't consider him an agreeable acquaintance."

"Oh, my dear Charley, this world is so given over to humdrum, so thickly peopled with a kind of human vegetable, that any man who has intellect and courage enough to be original affords an agreeable variety, no matter what turn his eccentricity takes."

"You might say that of the man who picks your pocket."

"Why, no, Charley, there is nothing eccentric in pocket-picking. It is the commonest thing in life, a recognised profession. Come and sup with me to-night. I have asked Elyard, and one or two others. Cast aside care for a couple of hours. Rely upon it, my dear friend, the young lady is safe and sound, and that black suit of yours is an anachronism."

"I wish to heaven it were so. I'll accept your invitation, though I shall be no better company than the skeleton at an Egyptian feast. I feel interested in this Mr. Elyard."

"Naturally. The man is a genius, and genius is too rare not to be interesting."

Captain Bywater had called at Mr. Thomas Leeworthy's house, in Bryanstone-square, and had been informed that the politician was in Paris, and not expected home for a week or ten days. He was not likely to be away longer than the latter period, his bulter told the Captain, as there was a bill coming before the house in which he was keenly interested.

Captain Bywater had set his heart upon seeing Mr. Leeworthy, though there seemed little hope that Helen's uncle could help him to discover the secret of her fate, having failed in discovering it himself. But then, the Captain argued, an uncle's love and a lover's love are as different as lamp light and forked lightning. The darkness which the feeble glimmer of affection had failed to penetrate might be illuminated to its nethermost depth by the piercing radiance of a passionate love.

It was nearly midnight when Captain Bywater presented himself at his friend's chambers in Gray's-inn, spacious handsome rooms, with the gloomy grandeur of a departed age. A dozen or

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THE LEAP OF FIERAMOSCA.—DRAWN BY FILIPPO PALIZZI.

THE HELOT.

AN IMMORALITY IN ONE ACT.

PERSONÆ DRAMATIS.

LYCUS *An Elderly Spartan.*
 ALTHAIS *His Wife.*
 IRENE *Their Niece.*
 THEON *Their Son.*
 THE HELOT.

SCENE: *The inner court of a Spartan House. Lycus discovered reading a letter.*

LYCUS—(reading)—“Your charges, Lycus, I return to you. Theon, your son, knows all his quantities, Disproves the creed of Anaxagoras, And demonstrates the sun moves round the earth In three unanswerable syllogisms.”
 (Speaks)—My niece, Irene, so I see is pretty, Well, there's no harm in that; as once or twice Her aunt remarked, I'm fond of pretty faces. Irene reads! How they do stuff girl's minds! Oh, but the darling actually knows How to cook mullet in white Cyprus wine! Dear little thing! I shall be fond of her.

Enter ALTHAIS.

Wife, they're both paragons of grace and learning; We shall feel thoroughly abashed by them.
 ALTHAIS—I think we're likely to be much abashed. Already has Irene slapped her maid, Whom Theon caught and kissed within the porch. And both are wrangling as to who was wrong.
 LYCUS—Impossible! Irene reads and writes, And Theon's perfect in his quantities.
 ALTHAIS—Well, have them in and question them yourself.
 LYCUS—I will (calling)—Ho, there! call Theon and my niece.

Enter THEON and IRENE, frowning at each other.

Children, we're glad to see you home again.
 To THEON—It seems you're very learned—need but choose A part to have your voice heard 'mong the highest.
 IRENE—If singing out of tune's meant, very true.
 LYCUS—Of course, that being so, I've but to ask How would you like to be illustrious?
 THEON—I know what I shall be; I'll be a tyrant! They seem to lead about the happiest lives. Realms cringe to them; they work but their own will; Its a profession suits me thoroughly.
 LYCUS—But one that's gone completely out of fashion.
 ALTHAIS—Or that is chiefly exercised at home.
 THEON—Well, there's another calling named at school: I'll be a hero.
 LYCUS—This will never do!
 THEON—So you can order me the magic shield, Impervious to all spears, the magic spear That pierces other shields. These implements Conduce to render the profession safer.
 LYCUS—Heroism's discountenanced; its low.
 THEON (sulky)—Well, in our school books, if a man is not Hero or tyrant, he's a patriot.
 LYCUS—Impossible! Your patriot's now a Turk!
 THEON—Well, then, I'm quite determined and content To just do—nothing!
 LYCUS—Nothing! hear the lad!
 Irene, shame him into industry!
 Let's have your mullet in white Cyprus wine.
 IRENE—I've given up cookery—it burns one's face.
 ALTHAIS—I've a new peplum that wants making up.
 IRENE—I've given up sewing—it destroys one's hands.
 LYCUS—Althais! both of them refuse to work.
 THEON—We worked enough at school.
 IRENE—We'll work no more.

DUET.

IRENE—I've no taste for any toil, Hands like these don't need employment; Work is such a thing to soil, I shall go in for enjoyment.
 THEON—All the books I read at school, Showed that when their schooltime's ended, Men just talk, and fight, and rule, Wear a breastplate, and look splendid.
 IRENE—When a girl has learnt her nouns, Female, masculine, and neuter; All she does is wear nice gowns, And distract a host of suitors.
 THEON—All the men in Plutarch's tales, Deal with spears and battle-axes; They would scorn such mean details— Settling bills and paying taxes!
 THEON and IRENE retire up, and remain bickering at back.
 LYCUS—What can be done? Are they too old to whip?
 ALTHAIS—What says their tutor? Surely he suggests Some remedy for sloth and disobedience.
 LYCUS—Of course!—a postscript. Don't do violence. To Nature's bent to grow at times awry. But show how hideous crookedness appears. Procure a Helot, who'll exemplify The utter dreadfulness of evil-doing.
 ALTHAIS—A Helot, ay! but where are Helots found?
 (Modestly)—I never needed one myself, you know.
 LYCUS—The Lictor Euphorus possesses one To illustrate his lectures on the Passions.
 ALTHAIS—Lycus himself requires some slight correction.
 LYCUS (aside)—Perhaps he may reform Althais too. (Exit.)
 IRENE and THEON come down, openly quarrelling.
 IRENE—I'm not!
 THEON—You are.
 ALTHAIS—Why, Juno, how they brawl!
 (Both turn to ALTHAIS.)
 IRENE—He said I could not run, nor ride, nor swim, Nor bear the buckler, nor uplift the sword, But was a wretched creature, doomed to sit My low life long, at some man's hearth and spin, Eating his bread and waiting on his word.
 THEON—And she flung out that I was only fit To deal with hounds and horses and hard steel, And left upon all objects that I touched The imprint of a big and brutal hand.
 I hate her!
 IRENE—Theon, I abhor thy name!
 ALTHAIS—You need not hate precisely, though that's better, Much better than the opposite extreme.
 THEON—A spiteful girl—and I who dreamed of queens!

IRENE—I thought all men would praise my lips and eyes; He thinks my eyes mawkishly, meanly soft; And holds my lips absurd, without a beard!
 ALTHAIS—Children, this is the fruit of idleness; A very dreadful vice.

(Enter HELOT, lazily stretching himself and yawning.)

HELOT—A dreadful vice.
 ALTHAIS—There is the Helot. Now they'll soon reform.
 HELOT (yawning)—It's one I'm everywhere renowned for curing.
 THEON—And who are you? Why, 'tis a base-born slave!
 HELOT—One mastered by his passions, not by men. I am a kind of moral scarecrow, sir,— A function which permit me to describe.

SONG.

HELOT—In my infantine years, when with wailing and tears, I attempted my earliest toddle; I discerned it was sad that the world was so bad, And resolved that I'd grow up a model. But a model, you mind, not of virtues designed, For I've found that on such men will trample; But to show what a bad base appearance vice had, I grew into a Shocking Example. Not a sin that I don't keep in sample,— That's the line of a Shocking Example; If you want to grow good, as you all of you should, Just you look at this Shocking Example. It was painful at first, when I gambled and curst, And I couldn't forge much without shrinking; And I fancied I'd sunk when I got very drunk, Though it was to preserve you from drinking! For you see I'd a score of rare virtues, or more, Upon which it was needful to trample; I've grown out of them now, for I fancy, somehow, I like being a Shocking Example! Of my vice there's a very good sample, I like being a Shocking Example! If you want to be good, as you all of you should, Here's a perfectly Shocking Example!

ALTHAIS—We've got the genuine thing, at any rate.
 HELOT—Bring me a couch, Althais, I am tired.
 ALTHAIS—I wait on you—insolent, idle knave!
 HELOT—Go on, you'll make me vainer than I am, Enumerating my accomplishments. Insolent, idle, knavish, that I am—I hope I show how vile the vices are.
 ALTHAIS—That is your aim? Oh, well then, here's your couch. (Brings couch. THEON and IRENE tilt.)

HELOT—And now Althais you can dance to me.
 ALTHAIS—Oh let but Lycus come, he'll punish thee!
 HELOT—You won't see Lycus yet, he is engaged— And pleasantly engaged.
 ALTHAIS—Then Lycus must Be doing something scandalously wrong!
 HELOT—Oh, a mere trifle, scarcely worth a word, He's only just now making furious love To fair Cyrene, my late master's wife.
 ALTHAIS—Base perjured Lycus! Is she very fair?
 HELOT—Delicious! and so young! not quite eighteen!
 ALTHAIS—Oh faithless Lycus!
 HELOT—Since you will not dance, Sing, you, Irene.

IRENE—Sing to you, a slave!
 THEON—Irene never knew a sharp from flat.
 IRENE—'Tis false.
 THEON—Yes, poor Irene has no voice.
 IRENE—She has.
 THEON—A wheeze, a whine, a feeble flow Of vinegar!
 IRENE—What this, trala trala.
 THEON—Horribly reedy.
 IRENE—Reedy! Oh but hear.

SONG.

IRENE—Oh love, the love I know not, My heart is sore for thee. Thy face the stern Fates show not, Or I am weak to see. But hide the form thou wearest, The thoughts within thy breast, I know that thou art fairest— I feel that thou art best! Ah, faint heart keep ye frozen, Voice of my soul be dumb; Till he, my lord, my chosen, Clad in his glory come. The bliss fate may bestow not To make my life thine own; But love, dear love I know not, Preserve me from the known!

(Enter LYCUS at back, gleefully rubbing his hands at first, and coming down briskly.)

LYCUS—Ha ha! I see, a happy family!
 ALTHAIS flying at him
 Perjured, perfidious flirt!
 LYCUS—My dearest don't! Things don't seem quite as pleasant as I thought.
 ALTHAIS—You love Cyrene, do you—a mere chit— Oh! after all these years to woo another!
 LYCUS (aside)—It's all these years that make a change so nice!
 (To HELOT)—T'was you divulged it, villain! it was you!
 HELOT, Holding him off—I told a lie; my dears, you may perceive The frightful fruit that falsehood ever bears!
 LYCUS—That lesson's well enough; but other faults I'd have them warned against. There's love, slave, love.
 HELOT—Oh! I've a cure for it; when I make love Cupid himself begins to loathe the subject.
 LYCUS—Excellent! make love hateful in their sight, I'll send you wine to help you in the task (exit).
 ALTHAIS—What! has he gone to bill and coo again!
 HELOT (taking wine a servant bears)—He sought this friend. Come, Kiss, my true old friend (drinks)!
 THEON—How that one draught gives radiance to his eyes! What smooth serene contentment's in his voice; Give me the flask.
 (To Servant)—Passes behind HELOT and drinks from flask.
 HELOT—And oh, Althais were he really false How many knights would battle for his place; You are so fair!
 IRENE—How sweet his voice has grown, It sends a strange soft thrill throughout my being.
 HELOT—So fair! and I so fond, Althais mine! See thy poor Helot at thy feet Althais;
 ALTHAIS—My ears have grown unused to speech like this.
 IRENE—It seems my native tongue my lips could frame Without an effort! and how sweet it is!
 HELOT—But ah, the love, its torments, and its tears! The bitterest drop e'er fallen for love's sake

Is sweeter, brighter than a ruby rain From Setia's slopes, or far Falernian hills.
 THEON—Is that so?
 HELOT—Love! it's madness murders pain, And veils sad truth, and falsehood sanctifies; Makes hucksters into heroes, lets us find The highest heaven in a harpy's arms.
 IRENE—It must, I feel it. Ah, how Theon looks! And—and his eyes seem somehow to improve.
 HELOT—They never lived who have not kissed to sleep, And woke with kissing dear and dewy eyes.
 THEON—Is't the wine? but oh, Irene's fair; Irene!
 IRENE—Theon!
 THEON—Oh, small, sweet, white hand!
 IRENE—His words ring in me like delirious songs.
 THEON—Oh, dear heart, Come unto me; this is love!
 IRENE (shyly)—I am afraid it is.
 THEON—How did he say Love showed itself?
 IRENE—I think he spoke of kissing.
 THEON (embracing her)—'Tis true—'tis done!
 HELOT (tipsy)—Evohe! Paphian Queen! A toast to Bacchus and the Little God!

(Winds his arm round Althais. Lycus appears at last.)

LYCUS—Now sober, cool, indifference should reign. Furies! Irene in young Theon's arms! Althais and the Helot close embraced!

(Rushing down and scattering the group.)

Villain! Althais! are you past all shame?
 HELOT—Ha, ha! I think that ought to warn them off.
 LYCUS—How so, vile wretch.
 HELOT—Well, flirting with Althais Don't show the tender passion at its best. It ought to frighten them.
 LYCUS—See how it does!
 HELOT—They've vicious instincts past all remedy. I give them up. And let me now confess— I always have to give this old vice up. It's horrid—horrid—but I'm sore afraid, It's human nature.
 LYCUS—But not Spartan nature.
 ALTHAIS—Aye, Spartan, too, sir, recollect Cyrene.
 IRENE—I know not of its nature, or if art— Its very pleasant.
 THEON (kissing her)—Is it not, Irene?
 LYCUS—Its very dreadful, but I must give in.
 THEON—That's right, and, Helot, for instructing us In this sweet, tender, human folly, take Your manumission—be a citizen!
 HELOT—Oh, anything but that! A Spartan! never. Leave me my slavery and sinfulness; Sparta's too good for me. All men can't live On moral rectitude and sorrel broth! I'm one of this world's weaklings, understand. We're frail, we fail; pitfalls attract our feet, In some magnetic fashion of their own.

(To Audience).

But you who've watched, or slumbered thro' our play, Perhaps in your benevolence will say: As men best see in time of yule and holly, The wise are wisest, who can stoop to folly. Backboards and stilts don't build the finest man; After all, frailty's part of nature's plan. And sometimes, if it is but to renew The scorn of naughtiness in all of you— Even a Helot is worth listening to.

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Do you e'er recall the rapture, Half a hundred years ago? When the one fact of my capture, Was enough for you to know. Quite triumphant your position,— That of happy fiancée; While I felt my manhood's mission, Was accomplish'd on that day.

I was happy too, how strange is That remembrance to me now, Life and Love have both their changes, Wisdom comes with furrowed brow. Once I doted on your beauty, Felt love's everlasting strife;— Now it is my dearest duty To admire my faithful wife.

Then I wrote a tender sonnet, Strong in love and weak in rhyme; On the fashionable bonnet You were wearing at the time; How I praised your curls so breezy, Of my calm good sense bereft; Would it be so very easy Now, to find a love-lock left?

As to *chevelures*, my own is Not what Absalom should wear, Then I was a young Adonis So you said,—from Lemprière. There's not much to choose between us, Age upon one's face will show, Though my heart recalls the Venus, Half a hundred years ago!

There's my boy, I see him bending O'er your girl, Love rules again; Shall we those young hopes befriending Thus re-forge that broken chain. May he never know rejection, Born beneath some luckier star Than mine was, though on reflection— Things are better as they are.

Once we met and loved, 'twas fated We should meet and love no more; I am comfortably mated, There's your husband at the door, Will he stay and dine?—he knows I Have some wondrous Clos Vougeot,— Though we were "Promessi Sposi." Half a hundred years ago.

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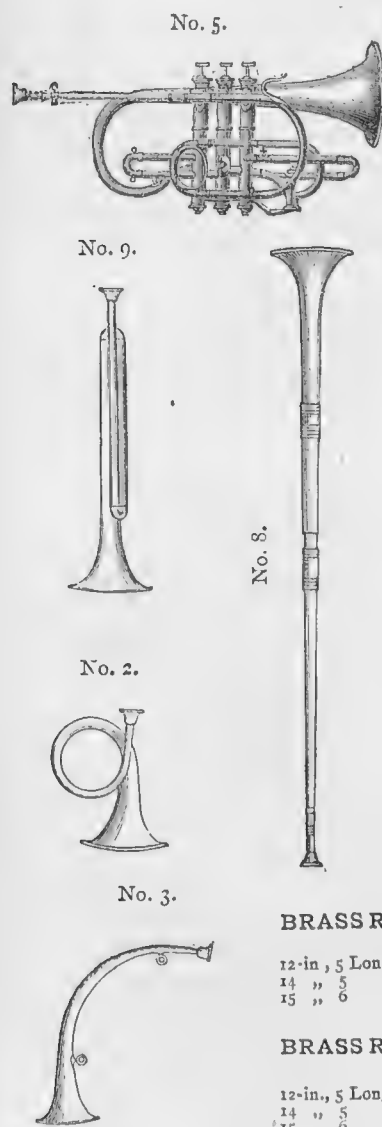
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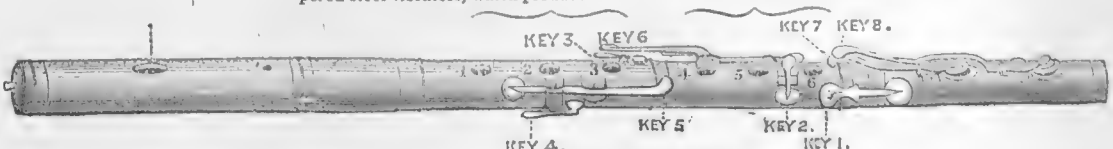
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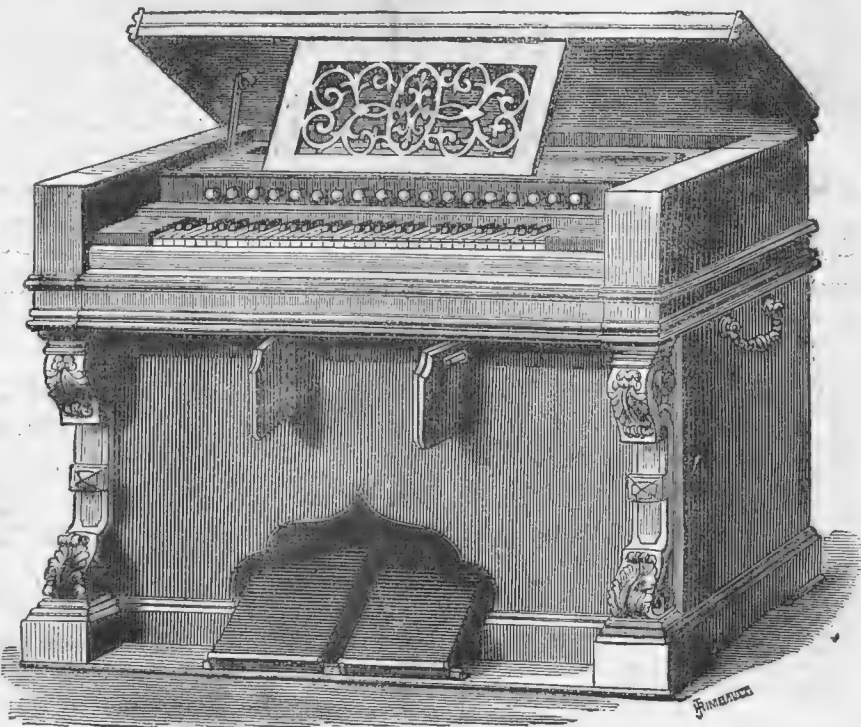
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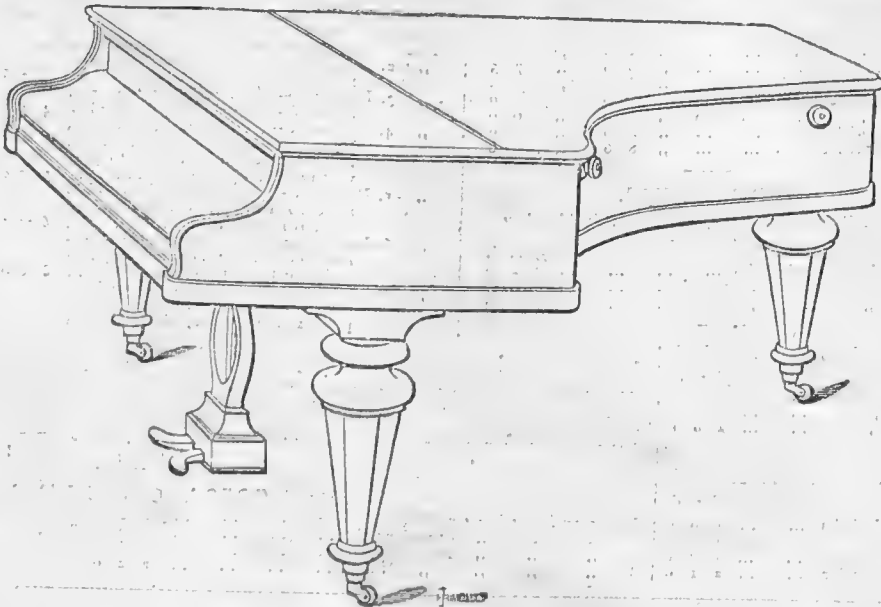
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"WHO CHECKS AT ME TO DEATH IS DIGHT!"—FROM A SKETCH BY W. W. OULESS, A.R.A.

THEATRES.

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.—

Boxing Night, December 26, will be produced the Grand Christmas Comic Pantomime, *THE WHITE CAT*, by E. L. Blanchard, scenery by W. Beverley, in which the celebrated Vokes Family will make their reappearance in London. Double Harlequinade. Morning Performance, December 27. Box-office open from 10 till 5 daily.

ROYAL ADELPHI THEATRE.—

Sole Proprietor, B. Webster. Manager, F. B. Chatterton. Every Evening at 7, *THE DEAL BOATMAN*, at 8.15 *FORMOSA*. Messrs. S. Emery, L. Lablache, H. Russell, Edward George, J. Johnstone, D. Cox, and H. Sinclair, &c. Mesdames Leighton, Billington, Hudspeth, Alma Murray, Clara Jecks, Stenbridge, E. Phillips, Kate Varre, &c. Prices 6d. to £4 4s. Box office open from 10 till 5 daily.

THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET.—

Lessee and Manager, Mr. Buckstone.—At 7.30 the farce *BY THE SEA*. At 8.15, an original farcical Comedy by W. S. Gilbert, entitled *ENGAGED*, produced under the immediate direction of the Author. Mesdames Marion Terry, Julia Stewart, Lucy Buckstone, E. Thorne, J. Roselle, M. Harris, Morelli, Harrison, &c. Messrs. Howe, F. Dewar, Kyrie, Crouch, Weathersby, Rivers, and George Honey, (specially engaged). Doors open at 7. Box-office 10 to 5. Morning Performance on Saturday next at 2.30.

ROYAL STRAND THEATRE.—EVERY

EVENING, at 7, *TIMOTHY TO THE RESCUE*. At 7.45, *FAMILY TIES*. Messrs. H. Wigan, Marius, Cox, Penley, Carter. Mesdames L. Venne, M. Holme, Foster, Williams, &c. At 9.40, *CHAMPAGNE*. Messrs. Cox, Marius, Penley, &c. Mesdames Claremont, Venne, &c.

OPERA COMIQUE.—THE SORCERER.—

Every Evening, at 8.45, this entirely new and original modern comic Opera, by Messrs. W. S. GILBERT and ARTHUR SULLIVAN. Mmes. Alice May, Giulia Warwick, H. Everard, and B. Brandram; Messrs. G. Henthorn, R. Temple, Rutland, Barrington, F. Clifton, and G. Gros-smith, jun. At 8, *DORA'S DREAM*. Open 7.30.

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ING PERFORMANCE OF THE SORCERER, Saturday, 15th, at 3 o'clock. Schools and Children Half-price (by payment at the doors only.) No free admissions given.

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VICTORIA CLAFLIN WOODHULL, the

great American Orator, will deliver her STARTLING LECTURE, "The Human Body, the Temple of God," at St. James's Hall, December, 8, 11, and 14, at eight o'clock.—Stalls, 5s.; balcony, 3s.; area, 2s.; admission, 1s. Tickets at Austin's, St. James's Hall, and usual agents.

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OUR ADDRESS.

ONCE more we duly mark the waning year,
With tribute rendered to the season's cheer.
Again, old friends and new, with glad device,
We claim the welcome heaped upon us thrice.
A Gossip's Bowl bessems our genial line—
"Waes Hael!" "The Stirrup Cup!" and "Auld Lang Syne!"
A Gossip's Bowl—indulge us, while, with pride,
We turn it round and glance at what's inside.

Behold this pretty maiden! from her lips
A peal of laughter ripples, saucy CHIPS
OF THE OLD BLOCK† are they, every one,
Who show their breeding in their bounding fun.
When those two handsome boys reach man's estate,
We know—their grandsires did it—they'll go straight,
If you don't hamper them, my bonny Kate!
Yoicks! Tally ho! bold Harry; boy, that crop's
In worthy hands, and as for those brown tops,
And pink, for Frank just now "a world too wide,"—
Their like by him shall yet be glorified!
Yoicks! tallyho! another such a shout
And the old hound there's certain to break out.
Of many a squandered field the hero, he
Seems by his whimpers low to share their glee.
Good bye! young CHIPS, a jollier frolic ne'er
Employed a skilful painter's loving care.

Another turn, brave Bowl! Though snow may fall
Without, "tis merry, merry in the Hall!"
Around the board in friendly strife engage
Warrior and crone, maid, serving-man, and page.
With ecstasy the Friar mirth invokes,
And ladles out the LAMBSWOOL‡ with his jokes!
Again upon the hand our Bowl we spin,
Again we hearken to the youngsters' din.
Our benison upon them! may their cup
Run o'er with bliss when done's the TUNING UP!
Pot-hunting niggers, plunging through the snow,
Your setter there appears full well to know
That when that piece of ordnance goeth off,
It is not ten to one you'll KNOCK DEM BOFF!

You velvet-muzzled beauty! never pug
Had mistress half so sweet, or warmer hug.
Spoilt darlings! in your frolics and your frets
We needs must own your thrall, our HOUSEHOLD PETS!
And needs must praise the pencil's magic touch
Which after "Can't you Talk?"—gives just another such!

With baleful glance and fiercely-gloating breath,
KING OTTO views his brother done to death;
His comely body pierced with many a scar,
Stark sacrifice to fratricidal war.‡
"In choice Italian" is the story told,
How FIERAMOSCA, mad or madly-bold—
The mood was frequent with those grim old Knights—
To "dree his weird" leapt from Gargano's heights.

A feudal castle, haunted high and low
With ghosts of doughty deeds that constant glow
I' the soul of him who now, with lofty strain
Fights all HIS BATTLES O'ER AND O'ER AGAIN!

Stand back, or rue it, overdaring wight!
Swift with his hands is he for wrong or right,
"WHO CHECKS AT HIM," indeed, "TO DEATH IS DIGHT!"

Bland is the breeze, there's promise in the sky,
And in the going; scent should mount breast-high
This HUNTING MORNING!—fair befall the pair,
They're workmen both, and safe to be "all there!"

WHERE'S THE BUTTER? tells it's own quaint tale.
We shudder at the shilling of the gale—
We aid, as 'twere, the hand that saves AT LAST!
Right thankful for the deadly peril past.
Thronging the beach waits Pity, soft and warm,
Eager to heal the ravage of the storm.

Our task is ended: readers far and near,
Partake, we pray you, of our mingled cheer.
The jolly "heart of Yule" will lightlier beat
When round the hearth is heard keen Fancy's feet;
The happy group grow happier when it hears
Far down in Memory's cells her gentle tears;
Eyes prone to laughter gleam with gladder rays
When Men of Mirth give way to Humour's craze;
Fancy and Fun and Sport and more beside
We bring to pleasure every bright fireside;
Pencil and Pen in one harmonious whole
Have kindly wrought. Behold our GOSSIPS' BOWL!

* The titles of former Christmas Numbers of THE ILLUSTRATED SPORTING AND DRAMATIC NEWS.

† The coloured two-page supplement to the present number, reproduced from a picture painted expressly for the purpose by J. T. Lucas.

‡ Matt. Stretch's humorous drawing on the cover.

§ Otto I., one of the most powerful conquerors of Germany, reigned from 936 to 973. He was the son of Henry I. by that monarch's second wife, Mathilde. His first wife, from whom he was separated, had also borne him a son, who was named Frankmar. He, as elder, would have succeeded his father, but the latter persuaded the other princes to accept Otto. They agreed, and from that time Frankmar lived only to avenge the wrong they had done him. While Otto was at war with the Duke of Bohemia, Boleslaw, his step brother, gained over several discontented princes and revolted in the summer of 937, in Westphalia. Otto I. hastened to quench the rebellion, and drove the forces of his brother and the other princes before him. Frankmar losing all hope, took refuge in a church, hoping to find sanctuary there, but found to his horror that his enemies did not respect the holy building. He fell, on the steps of the altar, slain by the lances of his brother's followers. There the king found him, and there he offered up a thanksgiving to Heaven for his glorious victory! The original of our engraving is by the pencil of Professor Albert Haur, and may be fairly regarded as one of the most powerful examples of the modern German school of painting.

A DREAM OF HEAVEN.

WRITTEN AND COMPOSED BY HENRY HERSEE.

VOICE. *Moderato.*

1. A mother sat watch-ing her
2. The mother look'd down on her

PIANO. *Moderato.* *poco rit.* *pp* *fz*

col Ped.

sleep - ing child, And her eye - lids were wet with hope - less tears; Tho' some - times so sweet - ly her dar - ling smiled, That the
dar - ling's face, Il - lum'd by a strange un - earth - ly light, As, locked in her arms in a last em - brace, His

watch - er al - most for - got her fears. But sud - den - ly op' - ning his deep blue eyes, His thin arms round his mo - ther's
soul to its home in heav'n took flight! With stream - ing eyes she knelt deep down to pray: "Give me strength, Lord, to suf - fer, and

dolce.

neck he threw; "I've seen the bright heav'n, a - bove the skies! And, dear mo - ther, the an - gels were all . . . like you; And the
not com - plain! The Lord, who hath giv'n, hath ta - ken a - way, But I know I shall see my dar - ling a - gain; Where the

f colla voce. *p* *tempo.*

an - gels were sing - ing, to harps of gold, "Come, gen - tle spi - rit! to Heav'n a - rise! The Shep - herd shall welcome you
an - gels are sing - ing, to harps of gold, "Come, ransom'd spi - rit! to Heav'n a - rise! The Shep - herd shall welcome you

Sva loco.

in - to His fold, And wipe a - way all tears from your eyes! And wipe a - way all tears from your eyes!"
in - to His fold, And wipe a - way all tears from your eyes! And wipe a - way all tears from your eyes!"

Sva loco. *colla voce.*

poco rit. *1st time. Dal Segno. S* *2nd time.* *p* *p molto rall.* *pp*

col Ped.

A MANCHESTER SENSATION.

BY FREDERIC MACCABE.

It was called, and is still remembered, as "The Exposure of the Davenport Brothers." It happened through a curious combination of little events.

When I was a boy, I was taken for a cruise of six weeks on the Atlantic, in the schooner John Wesley, from Liverpool, and during that time I learnt from the sailors how to splice a rope and how to tie a great many curious knots. That was one of the many waves of circumstance that flowed from distant points to meet and break into the "Sensation," which occurred while I was comedian in the stock company at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, during the season of 1864-5.

Amongst the stock company with me was Philip Day, *jeune premiere*, and it happened that a companionship grew up between us, through our mutual love of music.

One day I had played for him Mendelssohn's "Lied," known as the Ghost's March. This made him say something about the ghosts and spirits who worked for the Davenport Brothers.

"Philip," said I, "these Davenports are sure to come to Manchester. Let us practise in the meantime, and be ready for them; if they are imposters, we will tie them effectually; if their manifestations are genuine, and spiritualism is a fact, we will fail."

For three months we practised nearly every night; we went straight from the theatre home to my lodgings, where we worked at the ropes with an energy and perseverance worthy of a better object. Philip Day was quick and apt in execution, and in a short time he was my master in the *doing* what I could only design and attempt. At last the advertisements appeared, and the Davenport Brothers were announced at the Free Trade Hall. There was a Saturday morning seance, and Philip and I wended our way, fully prepared, and grimly determined to tie these ghostly brothers so effectually that we were certain of their being unable to free themselves. I walk up to the pay-box at the Free Trade Hall, and tender ten shillings, saying, "Two front seats, please." (I say "please" because I am a showman, not from any superfluity of civility). A face peers at the little hole of the money-box, and the mouth of that face says:—"Hello, Fred." "I say: 'Hello, Jemmy.'" "What's this?" says Jemmy. "Two front seats," says I. "Go on!" says Jemmy, "this is our show; take in any friends you have with you."

This was Jemmy Hime, now the obliging manager at the Moore and Burgess Minstrels.

Philip and I take our seats in the front row, feeling completely beaten. After all our preparation, after all our careful practice, our resolve to tie the Davenport Brothers resulted in this: we were tied down by professional courtesy not to interfere as one of the paying public! we were there as brother showmen, and any attempt on our part to interfere with the show would have been an outrage which no moral motive could excuse.

At the time I speak of, Mr. Henry Irving was a member of the company at the Theatre Royal, Manchester. He and I did not jump quickly into companionship. He was always quiet and reserved, and I had a feeling, whenever we met, that he was looking into me, which created an antagonism of friendship between us; for though I thought he liked me, and I knew that I liked him, I did not like a man to be peering into secrets which I held sacred to myself.

The Ghost's March did it. He had sat quietly listening while I played; and one Sunday, in my little room, I struck upon that particular "Lied." It led to a talk about ghosts and spiritualism. We soon arrived at the Davenport seance, which I learnt he had also seen. I found that he felt on the subject exactly as I felt. Loth to believe in the honesty of the mediums, but unwilling to speak lightly of what might be a great truth!

We had a club called "The Titans," of which Irving, Day, and I were members. The objects of this club were, social intercourse among actors, interchange of ideas, and a pleasant diversion in the practice of a game which we called "orthographics." As will be seen from the name, it was a "spelling game," but far more intricate and amusing than the more recent "Spelling Bee."

At the weekly meeting next following the events I have described, the subject of spiritualism was discussed, and several members gave their views with regard to the manifestations of the Davenport Brothers. This led to Philip Day and myself endeavouring to show how these might be produced, and an extempore imitation of a spiritualistic seance was the result. In this Mr. Irving assisted, by acting the part of Dr. Fergusson, the lecturer to the Davenport Brothers, and a humbug.

During the seance of the ghostly brothers, when a naked arm was thrust through the aperture in the cabinet and quickly withdrawn, he coolly told the audience that, "as a medical man he should say, that was a female arm!" The imitation seance in the Titan Club created profound astonishment amongst the members. It was decided that the matter should not end there. We then and there subscribed money for the expenses of a public seance.

At last the day arrived. The room was densely crowded; the windows carefully covered, so that not a ray of light could penetrate. On the large, ample platform, stood a wooden structure, raised from the floor so that the audience could clearly see there were no means of communication by trap-door from beneath. Mr. Irving went upon the platform,

made up marvellously to represent Dr. Fergusson, and commenced a lecture in the style of that individual. It was such a lecture as Mark Twain might have envied. When he had talked for about five minutes the audience were fully convinced he was in earnest; then came a sudden touch of humour; a turning off at a tangent, which made them roar.

The lecture over, Mr. Irving asked the audience to select two of their number to come forward, and tie us with the rope, of which there was a plentiful supply. From the side at which I stood, came a gentleman, whom I believe was one of the committee of the Mechanics' Institute. I saw that he was a good natured, quiet person, and that there was no danger to be apprehended from him. But, from the side where Philip stood, came forward a thick-set, broad browed man, with a heavy face, on which was firmly fixed an expression of a grim, determined purpose. I had arranged a complete system of signals, by which Philip and I could communicate without the knowledge of the lookers on. I signalled, "Let me take that man." Philip refused, almost scornfully. We stepped into the cabinet, and the gentlemen began to tie us. My *tie-er* soon completed his task and left me, as he thought, securely fastened; Philip's *tie-er*, whose name, it transpired, was Bullock, worked slowly and deliberately; he took twenty-five minutes for the operation, during which the audience became impatient, angry, and at last melancholy. They feared they were not to see any manifestations; they didn't want us to be so securely tied as to spoil these. Is it not a similar feeling which makes believers so tender to their mediums? I signalled that I was safe. Philip signalled that he was bound fast. A feeling of sadness and despair pervaded the audience, as our *tie-ers* retired, and the lights were lowered, while Mr. Irving proceeded to close the doors of the cabinet. On the very instant the doors closed, the tambourine jumped and clanged, the bell rang, and the fiddle played. A roar of delight came from the audience; they were not to be cheated out of their entertainment after all! In a minute the doors were opened, and we were examined and pronounced securely tied, exactly as we had been.

Bell-ringing, tambourine-flinging, fiddle-playing (out of tune), hands and naked arm (very white)—I used bismuth—appeared at the aperture. Finally we untied ourselves, and stepped out of the cabinet to receive a round of applause from the audience. Mr. Bullock, who is a believer in the Davenports, left the platform, saying, "If I had tied the other fellow there would have been no manifestations."

Then came the dark seance, in which the imagination of the awe-filled audience does more than the operators. A semicircle is formed on the platform by a selected number of gentlemen, and we take our seats on two chairs facing the middle of the semicircle. These gentlemen are requested to join hands, and on no account to break the chain thus formed, lest the spirits might harm them. Sceptics say that this is a dodge to prevent the audience detecting the operators. It was so in our case. A piece of rope is placed on Philip's knees, and a similar piece on mine. The lights are entirely extinguished, and darkness reigns supreme.

"Listen," says Mr. Irving, in impressive tones, "and you will hear the spirits tying them."

The audience obey, and hear the sound of the ropes as we tied ourselves with a knot that we had well studied, and which we could slip out of and into readily. "Lights!" and the gentlemen are invited to examine the two hand-and-foot-bound operators. There we are, more securely tied than before.

"Now," says Mr. Irving, "I place on the table in front of them a tambourine and a guitar, round the edges of which I trace a broad mark with this phosphorescent oil, which will shine in the dark, so that you can see them float about the room, and up to the ceiling."

But he doesn't trace around the edge; he traces a very small outline of the shape of the instrument on the edge of each.

Darkness! hush! We noiselessly slip from the ropes, our shoes have been prepared with list fastened on the soles and heels. I seize the guitar, Philip stoops, and I walk up his back and stand on his shoulders and thump the guitar.

"Look at the height," says Mr. Irving. The hushed audience look up and see the shape of a guitar phosphorously gleaming! It must be near the ceiling, it seems so small!

Then follow the touching the knees, and even the noses of the hand-joined gentlemen; and we creep back to our chairs, slip into the ropes, and—"lights!"

There we are securely tied as before. Every one of the manifestations in this dark seance is capable of as easy an explanation; but one more and I have done.

"Now," says Mr. Irving, "I will place under the feet of each a sheet of white note paper, and some gentleman will please trace with a pencil a line around them, so that you can see if they have moved."

This is done, and the wonders are repeated in the dark. When the lights are up again there we are, in the same position, and the gentlemen look at the paper and see that our feet are exactly within the line traced around them! How was this done? In the most absurdly simple way. Before slipping into the ropes we reversed the sheet of paper, and placing our feet upon it, we traced a line with pencils which we carried, and there we were!

The newspapers of the next morning had columns of well written description of the seance, and thus completed the "Sensation in Manchester."

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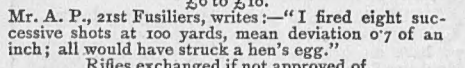
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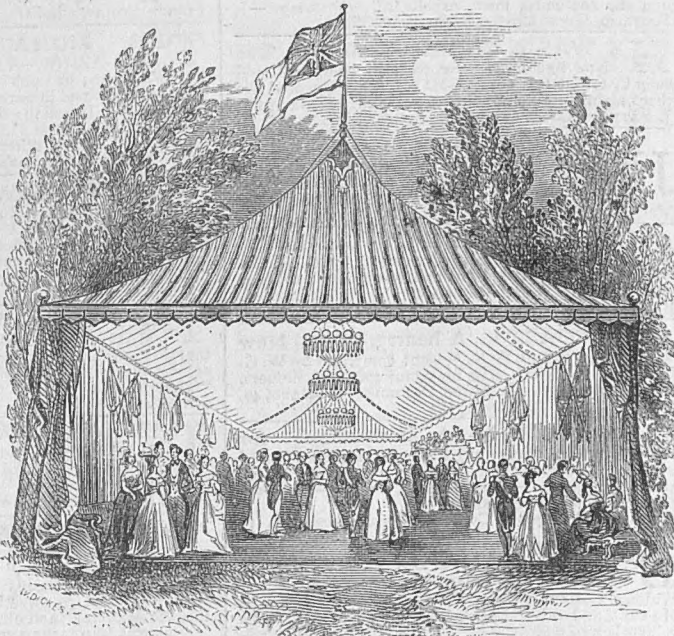
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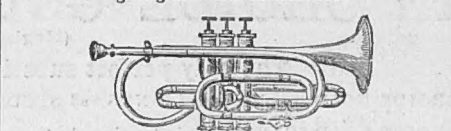
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